This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES

3 3433 07602777 4

Digitized by Google

ENOX LIBRARY

ıcroft Collection.
ırchased in 1893.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LENOX LIBRARY

Bancroft Collection.
Purchased in 1893.

Digitized by Google

NCI
BE45

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

7-8

Bell

~~ACF~~

NC1

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

Digitized by Google

Stothard del.' Delattre Sculp.'

London Printed for John Bell, British Library March 10th 1783.

Digitized by Google

6 A

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From *Urry's* Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From *Tyrwhitt's* Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----
Of ditees and of ſonges glade,
The which he---made,
The londe fullfilled is over all. GOWER.

My maiſter CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----
Whom all this londe ſchulde of ryght preferre,
Sith of our langage he was the lode-ſterre----
That made firſt to dyſtylle and rayne
The gold dewe dropys of ſpeche and eloquence
Into our tunge thrugh his excellence. LYDGATE.

The honour of Engliſh tong is dede----
My mayſter CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
Univerſel fadir in ſcience----
This londis verray treſour and richeſſe----
The firſte fynder of our fayre langage. OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,
Hevinly trumpet, oriege and regulere,
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,
Mylky fountane, clere ſtrand, and rois rial!,
Of freſche endite throw Albioun iland braid. DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! roſe of rethouris all,
As in oure toung flour imperial
That raiſe in Brittane evir, quha reidis right
Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,
The freſche enamilt termes celeſtiall:
This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,
Surmounting every toung terreſtriall
As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnight. DUNBAR.

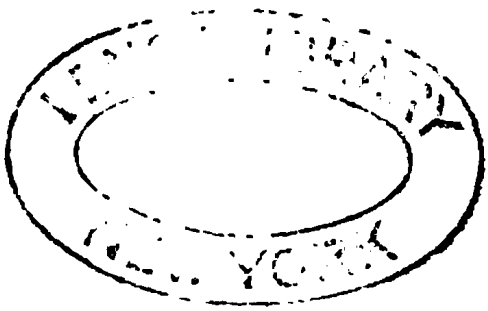
VOL. VII.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. VII.

CONTAINING HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale fain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath ſayd hem in ſwiche Engliſh as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not ſayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath ſayd hem in another----
Who ſo that wol his large Volume ſeke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of Engliſh undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whoſe gentle ſpright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilſt he lived was the ſoveraigne head
Of ſhepherds all------ SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning ſtar,
To us diſcovers day from far;
His light thoſe miſts and clouds diſſolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he deſcending to the ſhades
Darkneſs again the age invades. DENHAM.

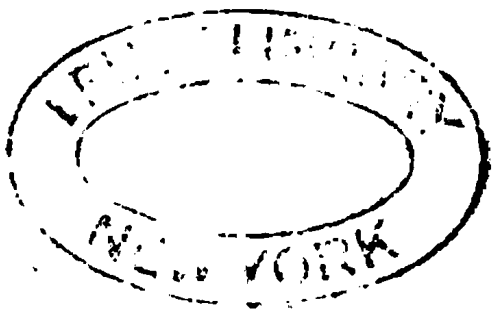
CHAUCER, him who firſt with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He ſang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eſtate and age
The faſhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----
Him who in times------
Dark and untaught began with charming verſe
To tame the rudeneſs of his native land. AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

MANY menne ſaine that in ſweveninges
Ther n'is but fables and leſinges;
But yet menne maie ſome ſwevin ſene
Whiche hardily that falſe ne bene,
But aftirwarde ben apparaunt,
This maie I drawin to warraunt.
An author that hight Macrobes,
That halte not dremis falſe ne leſe,
Buſ undoth us the aviſioun
That whilom mette King Cipioun.

The Romaunt of the Roſe] This book was begun in French verſe by William de Lorris, and finiſhed forty years after by John Clopinell, alias John Moone, born at Mewen upon the river of Loyer, not far from Paris, as appeareth by Molinet the French author upon the morality of The Romaunt, and afterward tranſlated for the moſt part into Engliſh metre by Geffrey Chaucer, but not finiſhed. It is entituled The Romaunt of the Roſe, or The Art of Love; wherein are ſhewed the helps and furtherances as alſo the lets and impediments that lovers have in their ſuits. In this book the author hath many glances at the hypocriſy of the clergy, whereby he got himſelf ſuch hatred amongſt them that Gerſon Chancellor of Paris writeth thus of him: ſay'th he, There was one called Johannes Meldinenſis who wrote a book called The Romaunt of the Roſe, which book if I only had, and that there were no more in the world, if I might have 500 pound for the ſame I would rather burn it than take the money. He ſaith more, that if he thought the author thereof did not repent him for that book before he dyed he would vouchſafe to pray for him no more than he would for Judas that betrayed Chriſt. *Urry.*

Digitized by Google

And who ſo ſaith and weneth it be
A jape or els a nicete
To wene that dremis aftir fal,
Let who ſo liſte a fole me cal;
For this trowe I, and ſay for me,
That dremis ſignifiaunce be
Of gude and harme to many wightes
That dremin in ther ſlepe a nightes
Full many thingis covirtly
That fallin aftir opinly.
Within my twenty yere of age,
Whan that Love takith his corage
Of yongè folke, I wentè ſone
To bed, as I was wont to done,
And faſte I ſlepte, and in ſleping
Me mettè ſuche a ſwevining
That likid me wondirous wele,
But in that ſwevin' is ner a dele
That it n'is aftirwarde befal,
Right as this dreme wol tell us al.
Now this dreme wol I rime a right
To make your hertis gay and light,
For Love it prayith, and alſo
Commaundith me, that it be ſo.
And if there any aſkin me
Whether that it be he or ſhe,
And how this bokè whiche is here
Shal hate, which that I rede you here,

Digitized by Google

It is The Romaunt of the Roſe,
In which all The'Arte of Love I cloſe.
The matir faire is of to make,
God graunt in gre that ſhe it take
For whom that it begonnin is!
And that is ſhe that hath iwis
So mokil priſe, and therto ſhe
So worthy is beloved to be
That ſhe wel ought of priſe and right
Be clepid Roſe of every wight.
That it was Mey me thoughtin tho,
It is five yere or more ago,
That it was Mey thus dremid me,
In time of love and jolite,
That al thing ginnith waxin gay,
For there is nethir buſke nor hay
In Mey that it n'ill ſhroudid bene,
And it with newè levis wrene;
Theſe woddis eke recoverèn grene
That drie in winter ben to ſene,
And the erth wexith proude withall
For ſote dewis that on it fall,
And the povir eſtate forgette
In whiche that winter had it ſette,
And than becometh the grounde ſo proude
That it wol have a newè ſhroude,
And make ſo queint his robe and fayre,
That it had hewes an hundrid payre

Digitized by Google

Of graſſe and flouris Inde and Pers,
And many hewis full divers,
That is the robe I mene iwis
Through whiche the ground to praiſin is.
The birdis that han left ther ſonge
While thei han ſuffrid colde ful ſtronge
In wethers grille and derke to ſight,
Ben in Mey for the ſunnè bright
So glad, that they ſhewe in ſinging
That in ther hert is ſuche liking
That thei mote ſingin and ben light;
Than dothe the nightingale her might
To makin noiſe and ſingen blithe,
Than is bliſsfull many a ſithe,
The chelaundre' and the popingay,
Than yongè folke entendin aye
For to ben gaie and amorous,
The time is than ſo ſavourous.
Harde is his herte that lovith nought
In Mey, whan al this mirth is wrought,
Whan he may on theſe braunchis here
The ſmalè birdis ſingin clere
Ther bliſsfull ſwetè ſong pitous:
And in this ſeſon delitous,
Whan love affirmith allè thing,
Me thought one night, in my ſleping,
Right in my bed ful redily
That it was by the' morowe erly,

And up I roſe and gan me clothe;
Anon I wiſhe mine hondis bothe,
A ſilvir nedil forth I drowe
Out of aguiler queint inowe,
And gan this nedill threde anone,
For out of toune me liſt to gone
The ſoune of briddis for to here
That on the buſkis ſingin clere.
In the ſwete ſeſon that leſe is,
With a threde baſting my ſlevis,
Alone I went in my playing,
The ſmalè foulis ſonge herkening,
That painid 'hem ful many' a paire
To ſing on bowis bloſſomed faire;
Jolife and gaie, full of gladneſſe,
Towarde a river gan me dreſſe,
Which that I herde renne faſtè by,
For fairir playin none ſaugh I
Than playin me by that rivere,
For from an hill that ſtode there nere
Come doune the ſtreme full ſtiffe and bold,
Clere was the watir, and as cold
As any welle is, ſothe to ſaine,
And ſomdele laſſe it was than Saine,
But it was ſtraitir, wele away,
And nevir ſaugh I er that daie
The watir that ſo wele liked me,
And wondir glad was I to ſe

Digitized by Google

That luſty place and that rivere:
With that watir that ran ſo clere
My face I wiſhe, tho ſawe I wele
The botome ipavid everidele
With gravell, ful of ſtonis ſhene,
The medowis ſofte, ſote, and grene,
Beet right upon the watir ſide;
Ful clere was than the morowe tide,
And ful attempre out of drede;
Tho gan I walkin throwe the mede,
Downwarde evir in my playing
Nigh to the river's ſide coaſting.
And whan I had a while igone
I ſawe a gardin right anone
Full long and brode, and everidele
Encloſid was and wallid wele
With hie walis enbatailid,
Portrayed without, and well entaylid
With many full riche portreitures,
And both the' imagis and peintures
Gan I beholdin befily;
And I wol tel you redily
Of thilke imagis the ſemblaunce,
As ferre as I have remembraunce.
Amiddis ſawe I Hate yſtonde,
That for her wrathe, and ire, and onde,
Semid to be a minoreſſe,
An angry wight, a chidireſſe,

And ful of gile and fell corage
Byſemblaunt was that ilke image,
And ſhe was nothing wele araide,
But like a wode woman afraide;
Yfrouncid foule was her viſage,
And grinning for diſpitous rage;
Her noſe yſnortid up for tene,
Ful hidous was ſhe for to ſene;
Ful foule and ruſty was ſhe this;
Her hed iwrithin was iwis
Ful grimly with a grete towaile.
An image of anothre' entaile
A lifte halfe was her faſt yby;
Her name above her hed ſawe I,
And ſhe was callid Felony.
Anothre' image, that Villany
Yclepid was, ſawe I and fonde
Upon the wall on her right honde:
This Villany was like ſomdele
That othre' image, and truſtith wele
She ſemid a wickid creture;
By countenaunce in portreiture
She ſemid be ful diſpitous,
And eke ful proude and outragious.
Wel coude he paint, I undertake,
That ſuch an image coude imake;
Ful foule and chorlich ſemid ſhe,
And eke villeinous for to be,

And litil could of noriture
To worſhippe any creature.
And nexte was paintid Covetiſe,
That eggith folke in many' a giſe
To take and yeve right nought again,
And grete treſouris up to laine.
And that is ſhe that for uſure
Lenith to many a creture
The laſſe for the more winning,
So covitous is her brenning!
And that is ſhe for pennis ſele
That techith for to robbe and ſtele
Theſe thevis and theſe ſmale harlotes,
And that' is routhe, for by ther throtes
Ful many one hongith at laſt;
She makith folke compaſſe and caſt
To takin othir folkis thing
Through robbery' or miſcoveting;
And that is ſhe that makith trechours,
And ſhe that makith falſe pledours,
That with ther termis and ther domes
Do maidins, childrin, and elengromes,
Ther heritage, alas! forgo:
Ful crokid were her hondis two,
For Covetiſe is evir wode
To gripin othir folkis gode:
For Covetiſe for her winning
Ful leſe hath othir mennis thing

Digitized by Google

Another image ſet ſaugh I
Nexte unto Covetiſe faſt by,
And ſhe was clepid Avarice:
Ful foule in painting was that vice,
Ful ſad and caitiſe was ſhe eke,
And alſo grene as any leke;
So evill hewed was her coloure
Her ſemed to' have livid in langoure;
She was like thing for hungir ded,
That lad her life onely by bred
Knedin with eiſel ſtrong and egre,
And therto ſhe was lene and megre;
And ſhe was clad ful povirly
Al in an oldè torne courtpye
As ſhe were all with doggis torne,
And bothe behinde and eke beforne
Ycloutid was ſhe beggirly.
A mantil honge her faſtè by
Upon a benche both weke and ſmale;
A burnette cote honge there withal,
Yfarrid with no menivere,
But with a furrè rough of here
Of lambe ſkynnys hevy and blake;
It was full olde I undirtake,
For Avarice to clothe her wele
Ne haſtith her nevir adele,
For certainly it were her lothe
To werin of that ilkè clothe,

Digitized by Google

And if it were forwerid ſhe
Would havin full gret nicete
Of clothing er ſhe bought her newe,
Al were it bad of wol and hewe.
This Avarice helde in her hande
A purſe which that honge by a bande,
And that ſhe hid and bonde ſo ſtronge
Men muſt abidin wondir longe
Out of the purſe er there come ought,
For that ne comith in her thought:
It was not certaine her entent
That fro that purſe a peny went.
And by that image nigh inough
Was paintid Envy, that nere lough,
Nor nevir wel in her hert ferde
But if ſhe either ſawe or herde
Some grete miſchaunce or grete diſeſe:
Nothing ne may ſo much her pleſe
As miſchefe and miſaventure;
Or whan ſhe ſeeth diſcomfiture
Upon any worthy man fall,
Than likith her right well withall:
She is full glad in her corage
Yf ſhe ſe any grete linage
Be brought to naught in ſhamful wiſe;
And if a man in honour riſe
Or by his wit or his proweſſe,
Of that ſhe hath gret heyineſſe,

Digitized by Google

For truſtith wele ſhe goeth nie wode
Whan any chaunce yhapith gode.
Envy is of ſuche cruelte
That faith ne trouth ne holdith ſhe
To frende ne felowe badde or gode;
Ne ſhe hath kinne none of her blode
That ſhe n'is ful ther enemy;
She n'olde, I dare ſaine hardily,
That her own fathir farid wele:
And ſore abieth ſhe every dele
Her malice and her male talent,
For ſhe is in ſo grete turment
And hate ſuche whan that folke doth gode
That nigh ſhe meltith for pure wode:
Her hert ſo kervith and ſo breketh
That God the peple wel a wreketh.
Envy I wis ſhall nevir let
Some blame upon the folke to ſet:
I trowe that if Envy i-wis
Yknew the beſte man that is
On this ſide or beyonde the ſe
Yet ſomwhat lackin him wold ſhe;
And if he were ſo hende and wiſe
That ſhe ne might abate his priſe,
Yet would ſhe blame his worthineſſe,
Or by her wordis make it leſſe.
I ſawe Envy in that painting
Yhad a wondirful loking,

Digitized by Google

For ſhe ne lokid but awrie
Or ovirthwarte, all baggingly;
And ſhe had a full foule uſage,
She mightin loke in no viſage
Of man ne woman forth right plaine,
But ſhette her one eye for diſdaine;
So for envie ybrennid ſhe
Whan ſhe might any man yſe
That faire or worthy were or wiſe,
Or ellis ſtode in folkis priſe.
Sorowe was paintid next Envie
Upon that wal of maſonrie;
But wel was ſene in her colour
That ſhe had livid in langour;
Her ſemid to have the jaundice;
Not halfe ſo pale was Avarice,
Ne nothing alike of leneſſe,
For ſorowe, thought, and grete diſtreſſe,
That ſhe had ſuffrid day and night
Made her yelowe, and nothing bright:
Ful ſade, pale, and megre, alſo,
Was nevir wight yet halfe ſo wo
As that her ſemid for to be,
Nor ſo fulfilled with yre as ſhe;
I trow that no wight might her pleſe,
Nor do that thing that might her eſe;
Nor ſhe ne would her ſorowe ſlake,
Nor comfort none unto her take,

Digitized by Google

So depe ywas her wo begonne,
And eke her hert in angre ronne.
A ſorowful thing wel ſemid ſhe;
Nor ſhe had nothing ſlowe ybe
For to beſcratchin all her face,
And for to rent in many place
Her clothes, and for to tere her ſwire,
As ſhe that was fulfilled of ire;
And all to torne laie eke her here
About her ſhulders here and there,
As ſhe that had it all to rent
For angre and for male talent.
And eke I tell you certainly
How that ſhe wept full tendirly:
In worlde n'is wight ſo hard of herte,
That had yſene her ſorowes ſmerte,
That n'olde have had of her pite,
So wo begon a thing was ſhe.
She all to daſht her ſelf for wo,
And ſmote togidir her hondes two;
To Sorowe was ſhe full ententife,
That wofull rechileſſe caitife,
Her roughtè litte of playing,
Or of clipping or of kiſſing,
For who ſo ſorowfull is in herte
Him luſtith not to plaie ne ſterte,
Nor for to dauncin ne to ſing,
Ne maie his herte in temper bring

Digitized by Google

To make joie on even or morowe,
For joie is contrary to sorowe.
Elde was ypaintid after this,
That shortir was a fote i-wis
Than she was wont in her younghede;
Unneth her self she might yfede:
So feble and so old was she
That sadid was all her beaute;
Full salowe was waxen her colour;
Her hedde for hore was white as flour:
Iwis grete qualme ne were it none,
Ne sinne, although her life were gone.
All woxin was her body' unwelde,
And drie and dwinid all for elde:
A foule forwelkid thing was she,
That whilom round and soft had be:
Her heris shokin fast withall,
As from her hedde they wouldin fall;
Her face yfrouncid and forpined,
And bothe her hondis lorne fordwined:
So old she was that she ne went
A fote but it were by potent.
The time that passith night and daie,
And restileſſe travailith aie,
And stelith from us privily,
That to us semith sikirly
That it in one poinct dwellith ever,
And certis it ne restith never,

Digitized by Google

But goeth ſo faſt and paſſith aie
That there n'is man that thinkin maie
What timè that now preſent is,
Aſkith at theſe grete clerkis this;
For men thinkin it redily
Thre timis ben ypaſſid by
The timè that maie not ſojourne,
But goth and maie nevir retourne,
As watir that doune runnith aie,
But nevir droppe retournè maie.
There maie nothing as time endure,
Ne metall nor yerthly creture,
For allè thing is frette and ſhall,
The time eke that ychaungith all,
And all doeth waxe and forfrid be,
And allè thing diſtroyith he;
The time that eldith our auncoſtours,
And eldith kinges and emperours,
And that us all ſhall overcomen,
Er that deth us ſhall have nommen,
The timè that hath all in welde
To elden folke had made her elde
So inly, that to my weting
She mightin helpe her ſelf nothing,
But tourned ayen unto childhede:
She had nothing her ſelf to lede,
Ne witte ne pithe within her hold,
More than a child of two yere old.

Digitized by Google

But nathèleſſe I trowe that ſhe
Was faire ſomtime and freſhe to ſe
Whan ſhe was in her rightfull age,
But ſhe was paſt all that paſſage,
And was a doted thing becomen:
A furrid cappe on had ſhe nommen;
Well had ſhe cladde her ſelf and warme,
For cold might els doin her harme:
Theſe old folke havin alwaie cold,
Ther kinde is ſoche whan thei ben old.
An othir thing was down there write
That ſemid like an ipocrite,
And it was clepid Papelardie;
That ilke is ſhe that privilie
Ne ſparith ner a wicked dede
Whan men of her takin none hede,
And makith her outward precious
With palè viſage and pitous,
And ſemith a ſimple creture,
But there n'is no miſaventure
That ſhe ne thinketh in her corage:
Full like to her was thilke image
That makid was like her ſemblaunce,
She was full ſimple' of countenaunce;
And ſhe was clothid and eke ſhod
As ſhe were for the love of God
Yholdin to religion,
Soche ſemid her devocion.

Digitized by Google

A pſaltir helde ſhe faſt in honde,
And buſily ſhe gan to fonde
To make many a faint praiere
To God and to his ſainctis dere:
Ne ſhe was gaie, freſhe, ne jolife,
But ſemed to be full ententife
To godè werkis and to faire,
And therto ſhe had on an haire.
Ne certis ſhe was fatte nothing,
But ſemid werie for faſting:
Of colour pale and dede was ſhe;
From her the gates aie warnid be
Of Paradiſe, that blisfull place,
For ſoche folke makin lene ther grace,
As Chriſt ſaieth in his Evangile,
To get 'hem priſe in toune a while,
And for a little glory veigne
Thei leſin God and eke his reigne.
And aldir laſt of everichone
Was paintid Poverte' all alone,
That not a peny had in hold,
Although that ſhe her clothis ſold,
And though ſhe ſhold an hongid be,
For nakid as a worme was ſhe,
And if the wether ſtormie were
For cold ſhe ſhold have dyid there.
She ne' had on but a ſtraite old ſacke,
And many' a cloute on it there ſtacke;

Digitized by Google

This was her cote and her mantele;
No more was there nevir a dele
To clothe her with; I undirtake
Grete leſir haddè ſhe to quake:
And ſhe was put that I of talke
Ferre fro theſe othre', up in an halke;
There lurkid and there courid ſhe,
For povir thing, where ſo it be,
Is ſhamefaſt and diſpiſid aie:
A curſid maie well be that daie
That povir man conceivid is,
For God wote all to ſelde i-wis
Is any pore man well ifed,
Or well arayid or icled,
Or well belovid, in ſoche wiſe
In honour that he maie ariſe.
Allè theſe thingis well aviſed,
As I have you er this deviſed,
With gold and aſure ovir all
Depaintid were upon the wall:
Square was the wall, and high ſomdele,
Encloſid and ibarrid wele
In ſtede of hegge was that gardin,
Came nevir no ſhepherd therein:
Into that gardin well ywrought
Who ſo that me coud have ybrought
By ladders, or els by degre,
It wouldè well have likid mè;

Digitized by Google

For ſoche ſolace, ſoche joie and pleie,
I trowe that nevir man ne ſeie
As was in that place delicious:
The gardin was not daungerous
To herborowe birdes many one;
So riche a yere was nevir none
Of birdis ſong and braunchis grene,
Therin were birdis mo I wene
Than ben in all the relme of Fraunce;
Full blisfull was the accordaunce
Of the ſwete petous ſong thei made,
For all this worlde it ought to glade.
And I my ſelf ſo mery ferde,
Whan I ther blisfull ſongis herde,
That for an hundrid pounde would I,
If that the paſſage opinly
Haddin ybe unto me fre,
That I n'olde entrin for to ſe
Th' aſſemble (God kepe it fro care!)
Of birdis whiche that therein ware,
That ſongin through ther mery throtes
Dauncis of love and mery notes.
Whan I thus herd the foulis ſing
I fell faſt in a waimenting
By whiche art or by what engin
I might come into that gardin;
But waie I couthe ne findin none
Into that gardin for to gone,

Digitized by Google

Ne nought wiſt I if that there were
Eithir a hole or a place where
By whiche I mightin have entre;
Ne there was none to techin me,
For I was all alone i-wis,
For wo and for anguiſhe of this,
Till at the laſte bethought I me
That by no waie ne might it be,
There n'as ladder ne waie to pace,
Or hole, into ſo faire a place;
Tho gan I go a full grete pace
Environ, evin in compas,
The cloſing of the ſquarè wall,
Till that I founde a wicket ſmall
So ſhette that I ne might in gone,
And othir entre was there none.
Upon this dore I gan to ſmite
That was ſo fetis and ſo lite,
For othir waie coud I not ſeke.
Full long I ſhroſe and knockid eke,
And ſtode full long all herkining
If I herd any wight coming,
Till that the dore of thilke entre
A maidin curteis opened me:
Her here was as yelowe of hewe
As any baſin ſcourid newe;
Her fleſhe tendir as is a chike,
With bent browis both ſmothe and ſlike;

Digitized by Google

And thereto by meſure large were
The opening of her eyin clere;
Her noſe of gode proporcion;
Her eyen graie as is a ſaucon;
With ſwetè breth and wel favoured;
Her facè white and well coloured;
With little mouthe and round to ſe;
A clovin chinnè eke had ſhe;
Her necke was of gode faſhion,
In length and gretneſſe by reſon,
Withoutin bleine, or ſcabbe, or roine;
Fro Hieruſalem' to Burgoine
There n'is a fairer necke i-wis
To fele how ſmothe and ſoft it is;
Her throte alſo ſo white of hewe
As ſnowe on braunche yſnowid newe;
Of body full well wrought was ſhe,
Men nedin not in no countre
A fairer bodie for to ſeke;
And of fine orfrais had ſhe eke
A chapilet, ſo ſemely on
Ne nevir werid maide upon;
And faire above that chapilet
A roſe garlande had ſhe yſet;
She had alſo a gaie mirrour;
And with a richè golde treſour
Her hedde was treſſid full queintly;
Her ſlevis ſowid fetouſly;

Digitized by Google

And for to kepe her hondis faire
Of glovis white ſhe had a paire;
And ſhe had on a cote of grene
Of cloth of Gaunt withoutin wene:
Well ſemid by her aparaile
She was not wont to grete travaile,
For whan ſhe kempt was feteouſly,
And well araied and richily,
Than had ſhe doen all her journe,
For mery' and well begon was ſhe.
She had a luſtie life in Maie;
She had no thought by night ne daie
Of nothing but it were onely
To graieth her well and uncouthly.
Whan that this dore had opened me
This maidin ſemely for to ſe,
I thonkid her as I beſt might,
And aſkid her how that ſhe hight,
And what ſhe was I aſkid eke?
And ſhe to me was nought unmeke,
Ne of her anſwere daungerous,
But faire anſwerde, and ſayid thus:
Lo, Sir, my name is Idilneſſe,
So clepin men me more and leſſe:
Full mightie and full riche am I,
And that of one thing, namily,
For I entending to no thing
But to my joie and my playing,

Digitized by Google

And for to kembe and treſſè me:
Acquaintid am I and prive
With Mirthe, the lorde of this gardin,
That fro the' londe of Alexandrin
Made the treis hithir be fet
That in this gardin ben iſet;
And whan the trees were woxe an hight
This wall, that ſtant here in thy ſight,
Did Mirthe encloſin all about;
And theſe imagis all without
He did 'hem bothe entaile and paint
That neither ben jolife ne quaint,
But thei ben full of ſorowe and wo,
As thou haſt ſene a while ago.

And oft timis him to ſolace
Sir Mirthe comith into this place,
And eke with him come his meine,
That liven' in luſt and jolite;
And now is Mirthe therein, to here
The birdis how they ſingin clere,
The mavis and the nightingale,
And othir joly birdis ſmale;
And thus he walkith to ſolace
Him and his folke, for ſwettir place
To playin in he maie not finde
Although he ſought one in till Inde;

Digitized by Google

The althir fairiſt folke to ſe
That in this worlde maie founde ybe
Hath Sir Mirthe with him in his rout,
That folowen him alwaies about.
Whan Idilneſſe had tolde all this,
And I had harkened well i-wis,
Than ſaied I to Dame Idilneſſe,
Now all ſo wiſely God me bleſſe,
Sith Mirthe, that is ſo faire and fre,
Is in this yerd with his meine,
Fro thilke aſſemble if I maie
Shall no man wernè me to daie,
That I this night ne mote it ſe,
For well wene I there with him be
A faire and joly companie
Fulfillid of all curtiſie.
And forth withoutin wordis mo
In at the wickit went I tho
That Idilneſſe had opened me
Into that gardin faire to ſe:
And whan that I was in i-wis
Mine hertè was full glad of this,
For well wende I full ſikirly
Have ben in Paradiſe yerthly,
So faire it was, that truſtith well
It ſemed a place eſpirituell;
For certis as at my deviſe
There is no placè in Paradiſe

So gode in for to dwell or be
As in that gardin thoughtin me;
For there was many' a birde ſinging,
Thoroughout the yerde all thringing,
In many placis nightingales,
And alpes, and finches, and wodewales,
That in ther ſwetè ſong deliten
In thilke placis as thei habiten.
There mightin men ſe many flockes
Of turtels and of laverockes,
Chalaundris ſele yſawe I there,
That very nigh forſongin were,
And thruſtils, terins, and maviſe,
That ſongin for to winne 'hem priſe,
And eke to ſurmount in ther ſong
That othir birdis 'hem emong;
By note ymadin faire ſerviſe
Theſe birdis that I you deviſe;
Thei ſong ther ſong as faire and wele
As angels doen eſpirituell;
And truſtith me whan I 'hem herde
Full luſtie and full well I ferde,
For nevir yet ſoche melodie
Was herd of man that mightin die,
Soche ſwete ſong as was 'hem emong,
That me thought it no bird'is ſong,
But it was wondir like to be
Song of meremaidins of the ſe,

Digitized by Google

That for her ſinging is ſo clere;
Though we Meremaidins clepe 'hem here
In Engliſhe, as is our uſaunce,
Men clepin 'hem Sereins in Fraunce.

Ententife werin for to ſing
Theſe birdis, that not unkonning
Were of ther craft and a prentiſe,
But of ſong ſubtill and eke wiſe;
And certis whan I herd ther ſong,
And ſawe the grenè place emong,
In herte I wext ſo wondir gaie
That I was nevir er that daie
So jolife nor ſo well bigo,
Ne mery' in herte, as I was tho;
And than wiſt I and ſawe full well
That Idilneſſe me ſervid well,
That me put in ſoche jolite:
Her frende well ought I for to be
Sithe ſhe the dore of that gardin
Had opinid and let me in.
From hennis-forthe how that I wrought
I ſhall you tellin as me thought.
Firſt whereof Mirthe yſervid there,
And eke what folke there with him were,
Without fable I woll diſcrive,
And alle that gardin eke as blive;

Digitized by Google

I woll you tellin aftir this
The faire faſſion all i-wis
That well ywrought was for the nones;
I maie not tell you all at ones,
But as I maie and can I ſhall
By order tellin you it all.
Full faire ſervice, and eke full ſwete,
Theſe birdis madin as thei ſete;
Layis of love full well ſouning
Thei ſongin in ther jargoning;
Some hie and ſome eke lowe yſong
Upon the braunchis grene iſprong;
The ſweteneſſe of ther melodie
Made all mine herte in revelrie.
And whan that I had herd I trowe
Theſe birdis ſinging on a rowe
Than might I not withholdin me
That I ne went in for to ſe
Sir Mirthe, for all my deſiring
Was him to ſene ovir all thing;
His countenaunce and his manere
That ſight was unto me full dere.

Tho went I forthe on my right honde,
Doune by a little pathe I fonde
Of mintis full and fenell grene;
As faſtè by withoutin wene

Sir Mirthe I founde, and right anon
Unto Sir Mirthe gan I to gon,
There as he was him to ſolace;
And with him in that luſtie place
So faire folke and ſo freſhe had he
That whan I ſawe I wondrid me
Fro whennis ſoche folke mightin come,
So faire thei werin all and ſome,
For thei weren like, as to my ſight,
To angels that ben fethered bright.
  Theſe folke, of whiche I tell you ſo,
Upon a karole wentin tho:
A ladie karoled 'hem that hight
Gladneſſe, the bliſfull and the light:
Well could ſhe ſing and luſtily,
None halfe ſo well and ſemily,
And cothe make in ſong ſoche refraining
It ſate her wondir well to ſing:
Her voice full clere was and full ſwete;
She was not rude ne yet unmete,
But couthe inough for ſoche doing
As longith unto karolling,
For ſhe was wonte in every place
To ſingin firſt folke to ſolace,
For ſinging moſte ſhe gave her to;
No crafte had ſhe ſo lefe to doe.

Tho mightiſt thou karollis ſene,
And folkè daunce and merie ben,

Digitized by Google

And made many a faire tourning
Upon the grenè graſſe ſpringing:
There mightiſt thou ſe theſe flutours,
Minſtrallis and eke jogèlours,
That well to ſingin did ther paine:
Some ſongin ſongis of Loraine,
For in Loraine ther notis be
Full ſwetir than in this contre.
There was many a timbeſtere,
And ſailours, that I dare well ſwere
Ycothe ther craft full parfitly;
The timbris up full ſubtilly
Thei caſtin, and hent them full oft
Upon a fingir faire and ſoft,
That thei ne failid nevir mo.
Full fetis damoſellis two,
Right yong, and full of ſemelyhede,
In kirtils and none othir wede:
And faire ytreſſid every treſſe
Had Mirthe ydoen for his nobleſſe
Amidde the carole for to daunce.
But hereof lieth no remembraunce
How that thei daunſid queintily,
That one would come all privily
Ayen that othre', and whan thei were
Togithre' almoſte thei threwe ifere
Ther mouthis ſo, that through ther plaie
It ſemid as thei kiſt alwaie:

Digitized by Google

To dauncin well couthe thei the gise;
What shoulde I more to you devise?
Ne bode I nevir thennis go
Whiles that I sawe 'hem dauncin so.
Upon the karoll wondir fast
I gan beholde, till at the last
A ladie gan me for to' espie,
And she was clepid Curtesie,
The worshipfull, the debonaire;
I praie to God er fall her faire!
Full curtisly she callid me,
What do you there, Beau Sire? (quod she)
Comith, and if it likith you
To dauncin, daunsith with us now.
And I withoutin tarying
Ywent into the caroling:
I was abashid ner a dele,
But it to me likid right wele
That Curtesie me clepid so,
And bade me on the daunce ygo,
For if I haddè durst certain
I would have karollid right fain,
As man that was to daunce right blithe:
Than gan I lokin oftè sithe
The shape, the bodies, and the cheres,
The countenaunce, and the maneres,
Of all the folke that dauncid there,
And I shall tellin what thei were.

Digitized by Google

Full faire was Mirthe, full longe and high,
A fairer man I nevir ſigh:
As rounde as aple was his face,
Full roddie' and white in every place;
Fetis he was and well beſeie,
With metely mouthe, and eyin greie;
His noſe by meſure wrought full right;
Criſpe was his here, and eke full bright;
His ſhulderis of largè brede,
And ſmaliſhe in the girdelſtede;
He ſemid like a purtreiture,
So noble' he was of his ſtature,
So faire, ſo jolie', and ſo fetiſe,
With limmis wrought at poinct deviſe,
Deliver, ſmerte, and of grete might,
Ne ſawe thou nevir man ſo light;
Of berde unneth had he nothing,
For it was in the firſtè ſpring;
Full yong he was, and merie' of thought,
And in ſamette with birdis wrought;
And with golde bete full fetouſly
His bodie was clad full richely;
Wrought was his robe in ſtraungè giſe,
And all to ſlittered for queintiſe
In many a place, lowe and hie;
And ſhode he was with grete maiſtrie
With ſhone decopid, and with lace,
By drurie and eke by ſolace;

Digitized by Google

His lefe a roſin chapilet
Had made, and on his hedde it ſet.
And wetin ye who was his lefe?
Dame Gladdeſſe there was him ſo lefe,
That ſingeth ſo well with glad corage,
That from ſhe was twelve yere of age
She of her love graunt to him made:
Sir Mirthe her by the fingir hade
A daunſing, and ſhe him alſo;
Grete love there was a twix 'hem two;
Bothe were thei faire and bright of hewe;
She ſemid like a roſè newe
Of colours, and her fleſhe ſo tender,
That with a brerè ſmale and tender
Men might it cleve, I dare well ſain;
Her forhedde frounciles all plain;
Bent werin her eye-browis two;
Her eyin graie, and glad alſo,
That laughdin aie in her ſemblaunt
Firſt or the mouthe by covenaunt;
I n'ot what of her noſe diſcrive,
So faire hath no woman alive;
Her here was yelowe', and clere ſhining;
I wot no lady ſo liking.
Of orfraies freſhe was her garlande;
I, whiche that ſene have a thouſande,
Sawe ner i-wis no garlande yet
So well ywrought of ſilke as it;

Digitized by Google

And in an ovir gilt ſamite
Ycladde ſhe was by grete delite,
Of whiche her leſe a robe ywerde;
The merier ſhe in herte ſerde.
Next her went, on her othir ſide,
The god of Love, that can devide
Love, and as him likith it be;
But he can cherlis dauntin, he,
And many folkis pridè ſallen,
And he can well theſe lordis thrallen,
And ladies put at lowe degre,
When he maie 'hem to proude yſe.
This god of Love of his faſcion
Was like no knave ne no quiſtron:
His beutie gretely was to priſe,
But of his robis to deviſe
I drede encombrid for to be,
For not icladde in ſilke was he,
But all in flouris and flourettes,
Ipaintid all with amorettes,
And with loſingis and ſcochons,
With birdis, liberdes, and lions,
And othir beſtis wrought full wele;
His garment was evèry dele
Ipurtraied and iwrought with floures,
By divers medeling of coloures;
Flouris there were of many giſe
Iſet by compace in a ſiſe;

Digitized by Google

There lackid no floure to my dome,
Ne not so moche as floure of brome,
Ne violet ne eke pervinke,
Ne floure none that men can on thinke;
And many a rose lefe full long
Was entermedlid there emong;
And also on his hedde was set
Of roses redde a chapilet.
But nightingales a full grete rout,
That flien ovir his hedde about,
The levis feldin as thei flien,
And he was all with birdis wrien,
With popingaie, with nightingale,
With chalaundre and with wodewale,
With finche, with larke, and with archangel;
He semid as he were an angell
That doune were come fro hevin clere.
Love had with him a bachilere
That he made alwaies with him be,
And Swete Loking clepid was he.
This bachilere stode beholding
The daunce, and in his honde holding
Turke bowes two, well devised, had he;
That one of 'hem was of a tre
That berith fruict of savour wicke;
Full crokid was that foulè stioke,
And knottie here and there also,
And blacke as berie' or any slo.

Digitized by Google

That othir bowe was of a plant
Withoutin wemme I dare warant
Full even' and by proporcion
Trectis and long, and of gode facion,
And it was paintid well and thwitten,
And ore all diaprid and written
With ladies and with bachileres
Full lightsome and full glad of cheres.
Thefe bowis two held Swete Loking,
That ne femid like no gadling,
And ten brode arowes holde he there,
Of whiche five in his hondè were,
But thei were fhavin well and dight,
Nockid and fetherid a right,
And all thei were with golde begon,
And ftrong ypoinctid everichon,
And fharpe for to ykervin wele,
But iron was there none ne ftele,
For all was golde, men might it fe,
Out take the fethers and the tre.

The fwiftift of thefe arowes five
Out of a bowè for to drive,
And the beft fethered for to flie,
And fairift eke, was clepedi Beautie.
That othir arowe, that hurteth leffe,
Was clepid (as I trowe) Simpleffe.

Digitized by Google

The thirde yclepid was Fraunchiſe,
That fethered was in noble wiſe
With valour and with curtiſie.
The fowerth was clepid Companie,
That hevie for to ſhotin is,
But who ſo ſhotith right i-wis
Maie therwith doen grete harme and wo.
The fift of theſe, and laſte alſo,
Faire Semblaunt men that arowe call;
'Tis the leſte grevous of 'hem all,
Yet can it make a full grete wounde,
But he maie hope his foris founde
That hurte is with that arowe' i-wis;
His wo the bette beſtowid is
For he maie ſoner have gladneſſe;
His langour ought to be the leſſe.

Five arowes were of othir giſe
That ben full foule for to deviſe,
For ſhaft and ende, ſothe for to telle,
Were all ſo blacke as fende in hell.
The firſt of 'hem is callid Pride;
That othre' arowe next him beſide
It was yclepid Vilanie;
That arrowe was with felonie
Envenimed, and with ſpitous blame:
The third of 'hem was clepid Shame;

Digitized by Google

The fowerth Wanhope yclepid is;
The fift the Newè Thought iwis.
  Thefe arowes that I fpeke of here
Werin all five on one manere,
And all were thei refemblable;
To them was well fitting and able
The foulè crokid bowe hidous
That knottie was and all roinous:
That bowe yfemid well to fhete
The arowes five that ben unmete
And contrary to that othir five;
But though I tellin not as blive
Of ther powir ne of ther might,
Hereaftir fhall I tellin right
The fothe and eke fignifiaunce,
As ferre as I have remembraunce
All fhall be faied I undirtake
Er of this boke an ende I make.
  Now come I to my tale againe;
But aldirfirft I woll you faine
The faffhion and the countenaunces
Of all the folke that on the daunce is.
The god of Love, jolife and light,
Ladde on his honde a ladie bright,
Of high prife and of grete degre,
This ladie callid was Beutie;
And an arowe of whiche I tolde
Full well ythewid was fhe holde;

Ne ſhe was derke ne broune, but bright
And clere as is the monè light,
Again whom all the ſterris ſemen
But ſmall candelis as we demen;
Her fleſhe was tendre' as dewe of floure;
Her chere was ſimple' as birde in boure,
As white as lilie' or roſe in riſe;
Her face was gentill and tretiſe;
Fetis ſhe was, and ſmale to ſe;
No wintrid browis haddè ſhe,
Ne popped here, for it nedid nought
To windir her or to paint ought;
Her treſſes yelowe, and long ſtraughten,
Unto her heles doune thei raughten;
Her noſe, her mouthe, and eye, and cheke,
Well wrought, and all the remnaunte eke;
A full grete ſavour and a ſote
Me thoughtin in mine hertè rote,
As helpe me God, whan I remember
Of the faſſion of every member:
In worlde is none ſo faire a wight,
For yong ſhe was, and hewid bright
Sore pleſaunt, and fetis with all,
And gent and in her middle ſmall.
Beſidè Beute yede Richeſſe,
And hight ladie of grete nobleſſe,
And grete of price in every place;
But who ſo durſt to her treſpace,

Digitized by Google

Or till her folke, in werke or dede,
He were ful hardie out of drede,
For bothe ſhe helpe and hindir maie;
And that is not of yeſterdaie
That riche folke havin full grete might
To helpe and eke to greve a wight.
The beſt and gretiſt of valour
Diddin Richeſſe full grete honour,
And buſie werin her to ſerve,
For that thei would her love deſerve;
Thei cleped her Ladie grete and ſmall;
This wide worlde her dredith all,
This worlde is all in her daungere;
Her courte hath many' a loſingere,
And many' a traitour envious,
That ben full buſie' and curious
For to diſpreiſin and to blame
That beſt deſervin love and name;
To forne the folke 'hem to begilen
Theſe loſengeours 'hem priſe and ſmilen.
And thus the worlde with worde anointen,
But aftirward thei prill and poinčten
The folke right to the barè bone
Behinde ther backe whan thei ben gone,
And foule abatin folkis priſe:
Full many' a worthie man and wife
Han hindrid and idoen to die
Theſe loſingeours with ther flatt'erie,

Digitized by Google

And makith folke full ſtraungè be
There as 'hem ought to ben prive:
Well evill motè thei thrive,
And evill arived mote thei be,
Theſe loſingeours full of envie;
No gode man loveth ther companie.
  Richeſſe a robe of purple' on had,
Ne trowe not that I lie or mad,
For in this world is none it liche,
Ne by a thouſande dele ſo riche,
Ne none ſo faire, for it full wele
With orfreis laied was every dele,
And purtraied in the ribaninges
Of dukis ſtories and of kinges,
And with a bend of golde taſſiled,
And knoppis fine of golde amiled;
About her necke of gentle' entaile
Was ſhet the richè cheveſaile,
In whiche there was full grete plente
Of ſtonis clere and faire to ſe.
  Richeſſe a girdle had upon,
The bokill of it was of ſton
Of vertue grete and mokil might,
For who ſo bare the ſtone ſo bright
Of venim durſt him nothing doubt
While he the ſtone had him about;
That ſtone was gretely for to love,
And till a riche mann'is behove

Digitized by Google

Worth all the golde in Rome and Friſe;
The mourdaunt, wrought in noble giſe,
Was of a ſtone full precious,
That was ſo fine and vertuous
That whole a man it couth ymake
Of palſie and of the tothe ake,
And yet the ſtone had ſoche a grace
That he was ſikre' in every place
All thilkè daie not blinde to ben:
That faſting might that ſtonè ſene;
The barris were of gold full fine,
Upon a tiſſue of ſatin;
Full hevie, grete, and nothing light,
In everiche was a beſaunt wight.
Upon the treſſis of Richeſſe
Was ſet a circle of nobleſſe
Of brende golde, that full light yſhone,
So faire trowe I was nevir none:
But he were konning for the nones
That could deviſin all the ſtones
That in that circle ſhewin clere;
It is a wondir thing to here,
For no man could or preiſe or geſſe
Of 'hem the value or richeſſe:
Rubies there were, ſaphirs, ragounces,
And emeraudes, more than two unces,
But all before full ſubtilly
A fine carboncle ſet ſawe I;

Digitized by Google

The ſtone ſo clere was and ſo bright,
That all ſo ſone as it was night
Men mightin ſene to go for nede
A mile or two in length and brede;
Soche light yſprang out of the ſtone
That Richeſſe wondir bright yſhone
Bothe on her hedde and all her face,
And eke about her all the place.
Dame Richeſſe on her honde gan lede
A yong man ful of fenelyhede
That ſhe beſt loved of any thing;
His luſt was moche in houſholding;
In clothing was he full fetiſe,
And loved well to have hors of priſe;
He wende to have reprovid be
Of theft or murder if that he
Had in his ſtable an hackenaie,
And therfore he deſirid aie
To ben aqueintid with Richeſſe,
For all his purpoſe, as I geſſe,
Was for to makin grete diſpence
Withoutin warning or defence,
And Richeſſe might it well ſuſtain,
And her diſpences wele maintain,
And him alwaie ſothe plentie ſonde
Of golde and ſilvir for to ſpende
Withoutin lacking or daungere
As it were pourde in a garnere.

Digitized by Google

And aftir on the daunce went
Largeſſe, that ſet all her entent
For to ben honourable' and fre:
Of Alexander's kinne was ſhe;
Her moſte joie it was i-wis
Whan that ſhe yafe, and ſaied, I have this:
Not Avarice, the foule caitife,
Was halfe to gripe ſo ententife
As Largeſſe is to yeve and ſpende,
And God alwaie inowe her ſende!
So that the more ſhe yave awaie
The more i-wis ſhe had alwaie.
Grete loos hath Largeſſe, and grete priſe,
For bothe the wiſe folke and unwiſe
Were wholy to her bandon brought,
So well with yeftis hath ſhe wrought.
And if ſhe had an enemie
I trowe that ſhe couth craftily
Make him full ſone her frende to be,
So large of yeftes and wiſe was ſhe;
Therfore ſhe ſtode in love and grace
Of riche and pore in every place.
A full grete fole is he i-wis
That riche, and pore, and nigard is.
A lorde maie have no manir vice
That grevith more than avarice;
For nigarde ner with ſtrength of hande
Maie winne him grete lordſhipe or lande,

Digitized by Google

For frendis all to fewe hath he
To doen his will performid he;
And whoso woll have frendis here,
He maie not holde his treſour dere;
For by enſample tell I this,
Right as an adamant i-wis
Can drawin to him ſubtilly
The iron that is laied therby,
So drawith folkis hertes i-wis
Silvir and golde that yevin is.
Largeſſe had on a robè freſhe
Of riche purpure farliniſhe:
Well formid was her face and clere,
And opened had ſhe her colere,
For ſhe right there had in preſent
Unto a lady made preſent
Of a gold broche ful wel ywrought,
And certis it miſſate her nought,
For through her ſmocke ywrought with ſilke
The fleſhe was ſene as white as milke.
Largeſſe, that worthy was and wiſe,
Helde by the honde a knight of priſe
Was ſibbe to Arthour of Breteigne,
And that was he that bare the enſeigne
Of worſhip and the gonfannoun;
And yet he is of ſuche renoun
That menne of him ſay fairè thinges
Before barons, and erles, and kinges.

Digitized by Google

This knight was comin al newly
Fro tourneying there faſte by,
Where he had done grete chivalry
Through his vertue and his maiſtrie,
And for the love of his lemman
He caſte doune many' a doughty man.
And next him dauncid Dame Franchiſe,
Arayid in ful noble giſe:
She n'as not broune ne dunne of hewe,
But white as ſnowe ifallin newe;
Her noſe was wrought at point deviſe,
For it was gentill and tretiſe;
With eyin glad, and browis bent;
Her here doune to her helis went;
And ſhe was ſimple' as dove on tre;
Ful debonaire of hert was ſhe.
She durſtè neither ſay ne do
But that that hir belongith to;
And if a manne were in diſtreſſe,
And for her love in hevineſſe,
Her hert would have ful grete pitie,
She was ſo amiable and free;
For were a manne for her beſtadde
She wouldè ben right fore a dradde
That ſhe did ovir gret outrage;
But ſhe him holpe his harme t'aſwage
Her thought it all a vilanie:
And ſhe had on a ſuckiny

Digitized by Google

That not of hempè herdis was,
So faire was non in all Arras;
Lorde! it was riddeled fetifly;
There ne was not a point truely
That it n'as in his right affiſé:
Ful wel iclothid was Fraunchiſe,
For there n'is no clothe ſitteth bette
On damoſell than doth rokette;
A woman wel more fetiſe is
In rokette than in cote i-wis;
The white rokette riddilid faire
Betokenith that full debonaire
And ſwete was ſhe that it yhere.
By her dauncid a bachelere,
I can not tell you what he hight,
But faire he was and of gode hight,
Al had he ben, I ſaie no more,
The lord'is ſonne of Windèſore.
And next that daunced Curtiſy,
That preiſed was of lowe and hie,
For nethir proude ne fole was ſhe;
She for to daunce callid me;
I praie God give to her gode grace!
For whan I come firſt to the place
She n'as not nice ne outrageous,
But wiſe and ware, and vertuous,
Of faire ſpeche, and of faire anſwere;
Was nevir wight miſſaide of here;

She bare no rancour to no wight;
Clere broune she was, and therto bright
Of face, and body avenaunt;
I wotte no lady so plesaunt:
She werin worthy for to bene
An empèresse or crounid quene.
And by her went a knight dauncing
That worthy was and wel speking,
And ful wel conde he don honour:
The knight was faire and stiffe in stour,
And in armure a semely man,
And wel beloved of his lemman.
Faire Idilnesse than nexte saugh I,
That alway was me fastè by:
Of her have I withoutin faile
Tolde you the shape and appareile,
For, (as I said) lò! that was she
That did to me so grete bounte;
She me the gate of that gardin
Undid, and let me passin in,
And aftir dauncid, as I gesse.
And she fulfilled of lustinesse
That n'as not yet xii yere of age,
With hertè wilde and thought volage:
Nice she ywas, but she ne mente
None harme ne sleight in her entente,
But onely luste and jolite,
(For yongè folke, wel wetin ye,

Digitized by Google

Have litill thought but on ther play:)
Her lemman was beside alway
In ſuche a giſe that he her kiſſe
At allè timis that him liſte,
That al the dauncè might it ſe;
They make no force of privite,
For who ſpake of 'hem ill or wele
Thei were aſhamid nere a dele,
But men might ſene 'hem kiſſè there
As though it two yonge dovis were;
For yonge was thilkè bachilere,
Of beute wot I non his pere,
And he was right of ſuche an age
As youthe his lefe, and ſuche corage.
The luſty folke that dauncid there,
And alſo' othir that with 'hem were,
That werin all of ther meine,
Ful hendè folke, bothe wiſe and fre,
And folkè of faire porte truely,
There werin allè cominly.
Whan I had ſene the countenaunces
Of them that laddin thus theſe daunces,
Than had I will to go and ſe
The gardin that ſo likid me,
And lokin on theſe faire laureres,
On pine trees, cedres, oliveres.
The dauncis than endid ywere,
For many' of 'hem that dauncid there

Were with ther lovis went away,
Undir the trees to have ther play.

A Lorde thei livid luſtily!
A grete fole were he ſikirly
That n'olde his thankes ſuche life to lede,
For this dare I ſaine out of drede,
That who ſo might ſo well yfare
For bettir life durſt him not care,
For there n'is ſo gode paradiſe
As to' have a love at his deviſe.
Out of that place went I tho,
And in that gardin gan I go,
Playing along full merily.
The god of Love full haſtily
Unto him Swete Loking yclept;
No lengir would he that ſhe kept
His bowe of gold that ſhone ſo bright:
He haddin him bent anon right,
And he full ſonè ſet an ende,
And at a braide he gan it bende,
And toke him of his arowes five
Ful ſharpe and redy for to drivè.
Now God that ſitteth in majeſte
Fro dedly woundis he kepe me
If ſo be that he had me ſhete,
For if I with his arowe mete
It had me grevid ſore i-wis;
But I, that nothing wiſt of this,

Digitized by Google

Went up and doune ful many' a waie,
And he me folowed faſt alwaie;
But no where would I reſtè me
Til' I had in all the gardin be.

The gardin was by meſuring
Right even' and ſquare in compaſſing;
It as longe was as it was large;
Of fruite had every tre his charge
But it were any hidous tre,
Of whiche there werin two or thre.
There were (and that wote I full wele)
Of pomgranetts a full grete dele,
That is a frute ful wel to like,
Namely to folke whan thei ben ſike;
And trees there werin grete foiſon
That berin nuttes in ther ſeſon,
Suche as menne Nutemiggis ycall,
That ſote of ſavour ben withall,
And of almandris grete plente,
Figgis, and many a date tre,
There werin, if that menne had nedè,
Through the gardin in length and brede.
There was eke wexing many' a ſpice,
As clowe, gilofre, and licorice,
Gingiber, and grein de Paris,
Canell, and ſetewale of pris,
And many' a ſpice delitable
To etin whan men riſe fro table.

Digitized by Google

And many homely trees there were
That peches, coines, and apples, bere,
Medlers, plommis, peris, cheſteinis,
Cheriſe, of whiche many one faine is,
Notis, and aleis, and bolas,
That for to ſene it was ſolas,
With many high laurer and pine,
Was rengid clene all that gardine
With cipris, and with oliveris,
Of whiche that nigh no plenty here is.
Ther werin elmis grete and ſtrong,
Maplis, aſhe, oke, aſpe, planis long,
Fine ewe, popler, and lindis faire,
And othir trees full many' a paire.
What ſhould I tell you more of it?
There werin ſo many trees yet
That I ſhould al encombrid be
Er I had rekenid every tre.
Theſe trees were ſet, that I deviſe,
One from an othir in aſſiſe
Five fadome or ſixe, I trowe ſó;
But they were hie and gret alſo,
And for to kepe out wel the ſunne
The croppis were ſo thicke ironne,
And every braunche in othir knitte,
And ful of grenè levis ſitte,
That ſunnè might there none diſcende
Leſt that the tendir graſſis ſhende.

There might men does and roes ise,
And of squirels ful grete plente
From bow to bow alwaie leping;
Connis there were also playing,
That comin out of ther clapers,
Of sondry colours and maners,
And madin many' a tourneying
Upon the freshè grasse springing.
In placis sawe I wellis there
In whichè there no froggis were,
And faire in shadowe was eche wel;
But I ne can the nombre tel
Of stremis smal that by devise
Mirth had done come thorough condise,
Of whiche the watir in renning
Gan makin a noise ful liking.
About the brinkis of these wellis,
And by the stremes ovir al ellis,
Sprange up the grasse, as thicke iset
And soft eke as any velvet,
On which men might his lemman ley,
As on a fethirbed to pley,
For the erth was ful softe and swete;
Thorough moisture of the wel wete
Sprong up the sotè grenè gras
As faire, as thicke, as mister was;
But moche amendid it the place
That the erth was of suche a grace

That it of flouris hath plente
That both in somre' and wintir be.
There sprange the violet al newe,
And freshe pervinkè riche of hewe,
And flouris yelowe, white, and rede;
Suche plente grewe there ner in mede:
Ful gaie was al the grounde and queint,
And poudrid as men had it peint,
With many'a freshe and sondry floure,
That castin up ful gode savour.
I wol not longe holde you in fable
Of al this gardin dilectable;
I mote my tongè stintin nede,
For I ne maie withoutin drede
Naught tellin you the heutie all,
Ne halfe the bounte, there withall.
I went on right honde and on lefte
About the place; it was not lefte
Till I had al the gardin bene
In the eftris that men might sene.
And thus while I went in my playe
The god of Love me folowed aye,
Right as an hunter can abide
The beste till he seith his tide
To shote at godenesse to the dere,
Whan that him nedith go no nere.
And so befil I restid me
Besides a wel undir a tre,

Digitized by Google

Whiche tre in Fraunce men cal a Pine,
But fithe the time of King Pepine
Ne grewe there tre in mann'is ſight
So faire, ne ſo wel woxé in hight;
In al that yarde ſo high was none;
And ſpringing in a marble ſtone
Had Nature ſet, the ſothe to tell,
Under that pinè tre a well,
And on the bordir al without
Was writtin in the ſtone about
Letteris ſmal, that ſaidin thus,
Here whilome ſtarſe faire Narciſſus.
Narciſſus was a bachilere
That Love had caught in his daungere,
And in his nette gan him ſo ſtraine;
And did him ſo to wepe and plaine,
That nede him muſt his life forgo
For a faire lady hight Echo
Him loved ovir any creture,
And gan for him ſuche paine endure,
That on a timè ſhe him tolde
That if he her ne lovin wolde
That her behovid nedis die;
There laie none othir remedie.
But nathèleſſe for his beaute
So feirs and daungerous was he
That he n'olde grauntin her aſking
For weping ne for faire praying.

Digitized by Google

And whan ſhe herde him werne her ſo
She had in hert ſo gretè wo,
And toke it in ſo grete diſpite,
That ſhe withoutin more reſpite
Was ded anon; but ere ſhe diede
Ful pitouſly to God ſhe preide
That the proude hertid Narciſſus,
That was in love ſo daungerous,
Might on a day ben hampered ſo
For love, and ben ſo hote for wo,
That ner he might to joie attaine,
Than ſhould he fele in every vaine
What ſorowe trewe loveris maken.
That ben vilainouſly forſaken.

Thia prayir was but reſonable,
Therfore God helde it ferme and ſtable,
For Narciſſus, ſhortly to tell,
By aventure came to that well
To reſt him in the ſhadowing
O day whan he came from hunting.
This Narciſſus had ſuffrid paines
For renning al daie in the plaines,
And was for thurſt in grete diſtreſſe
Of herte, and of his werineſſe,
That had his breth almoſt benomen.
Whan he was to that wel icomen,

Digitized by Google

That ſhadowed was with braunchis grene,
He thought of thilkè watir ſhene
To drinke, and freſhe him wele withall,
And doune on knees he gan to fall,
And forth his necke and hed outſtraught,
To drinkin of that well a draught;
And in the watre' anon was ſone
His noſe, his mouthe, his eyin, ſhene,
And he therof was all abaſhed,
His owne ſhadowe had him betraſhed,
For wel wende he the ſoome to ſe
Of a childe of full grete beaute:
Full well couth Love him wrethè tho
Of daungir and of pride alſo
That Narciſſus ſomtime him bere;
He quite him well his guerdon there,
For he muſid ſo in the well
That ſhortily, the ſothe to tell,
He lovid his owne ſhadowe ſo
That at the laſt he ſtarfe for wo;
For whan he ſawe that he his will
Might in no manir way fulfill,
And that he was ſo faſtè caught
That he him couthè comfort naught,
He loſt his witte right in that place,
And deide within a litill ſpace;
And thus his wariſon he toke
For the lady that he forſoke.

Digitized by Google

Ladies, I praie enſample taketh,
Ye that ayenſt your love miſtaketh;
If of ther deth you be to wite
God can ful wel your wilè quite.
Whan this letter, of whiche I tell,
Had taught me that it was the well
Of Narciſſus in his beaute,
I gan anon withdrawè me
Whan it fel in my remembraunce
That him betide ſuche a miſchaunce;
But at the laſte than thoughtin I
That ſcathèleſſe full ſikirly
I might unto the wellè go,
Wherof ſhull I abaſhin ſo?
Unto the welle than went I me,
And doune I loutid for to ſe
The clerè watir in the ſtone,
And eke the gravel, whiche that ſhone
Doune in the' botome as ſilvir fine,
For of the welle this is the fine,
In world is none ſo clere of hewe,
The watre' is evir freſh and newe,
That welmith up with wavis bright
The mountenaunce of two fingir hight,
About it is the graſſe ſpringing
For moiſte ſo thicke and well liking
That it ne may in wintir die
No more than may the ſee be drie.

Digitized by Google

Doune at the botome ſet ſawe I
Two criſtall ſtonis craftily
In thilkè freſhe and fairè well;
But o thinge ſothly dare I tell
That ye wol holde a grete mervaile
Whan it is tolde withoutin faile,
For whan the ſunnè clere in ſight
Caſt in that welle his bemis bright,
And that the hęte diſcendid is,
Than taketh the criſtall ſtone i-wis
Againe the ſunne an hundrid hewis,
Blewe, yelow, red, that freſh and new is,
Yet hath the mervailous criſtall
Suche ſtrength that the place ovir all,
Both foule and tre, and levis grene,
And all the yerde, in it is ſene:
And for to don you to' undirſtonde
To make enſample wol I fonde;
Right as a mirrour opinly
Shewith al thing that ſtondeth thereby,
As well the colour as figure,
Withoutin any covirture
Right ſo the criſtall ſtone ſhining,
Withoutin any diſceving,
The entrees of the yerde accuſeth
To him that in the watir muſeth,
For evir in whiche halfe ye be
Ye may wel halfe the gardine ſe,

Digitized by Google

And if ye turne ye may right wele
Sene the remènaunt every dele,
For there is none ſo litil thing
So hid ne cloſin with ſhitting
That it n'is ſene, as though it were
Ypaintid in the criſtall there.
This is the mirrour perillus
In whiche the proude Narciſſus
Sey al his fairè face ſo bright
That made him ſith to lie upright,
For who ſo loke in that mirrour
There may nothing ben his ſocour
That he ne ſhal there ſe ſomthing
That ſhal him lede into laughing:
Ful many' a worthy man hath it
Yblent, for folke of gretiſt wit
Ben ſone ycaught here and ywaited;
Withoutin reſpite ben thei baited:
Here comith to folke of newe rage,
Here chaungith many wight corage,
Here lithe no rede ne witte therto,
For Venus ſonne, Dan Cupido,
Hath ſowin there of love the ſede,
That helpe ne lithe there none ne rede,
So cerclith it the welle about;
His ginnis hath he ſet without,
Right for to catche in his panters
Theſe damoſels and bachilers;

Digitized by Google

Love wil none othir birdis catche
Though he ſet eithir nette or katche;
And for the ſede that here was ſowen
This welle is cleped, as well is knowen,
The Welle of Love of very right,
Of whiche there hath ful many wight
Spokin in bokis diverſely;
But thei ſhul ner ſo verily
Diſcripcion of the welle here,
Ne eke the ſothe of this matere,
As ye ſhul whan I have undo
The crafte that here belongith to.

Alway me likid for to dwell
To ſene the chriſtall in the well,
That ſhewid me ful opinly
A thouſande thingis faſtè by;
But I may ſaie in ſory houre
Stode I to lokin or to poure,
For ſithin I ſore have yſiked
That mirrour hath me now entriked;
But had I firſt knowen in my wit
The vertue and ſtrengthis of it
I n'oldè not have muſid there;
Me had bettir ben ellis-whére,
For in the ſnare I fell anone
That had bitreſhid many one.
In thilkè mirrour ſawe I tho,
Among a thouſande thingis mo,

Digitized by Google

A roſir chargid ful of roſis,
That with an hedge aboute encloſed is;
Tho had I ſuche luſt and envie,
That for Paris ne for Pavie
N'olde I have left to gone and ſe
There gretiſt hepe of roſis be.
Whan I was with this rage yhente,
That caught hath many a man and ſhente,
Towarde the roſir gan I go,
And whan I was not ferre there fro
The ſavour of the roſis ſote
Me ſmote right to the hertè rote,
As I had all enbaumid me;
And if I n'ad endoutid me
To have ben hatid or aſſailed
My thankis wol I not have failed
To pull a Roſe of al that route
To berin in mine honde aboute,
And ſmellin to it where I went;
But er I dredde me to repent,
And leſte it grevid or forthought
The lorde that thilkè gardin wrought.
Of roſis there werin grete wone,
So faire werin nevir in Rone;
Of knoppis cloſe ſome ſawe I there,
And ſome wel bettir woxin were,
And ſome there ben of othir moiſon,
That drowè nigh to ther ſeſon,

Digitized by Google

And ſpedde 'hem faſtè for to ſpredde:
I lovè wel ſuche roſis redde,
For brode roſis and open' alſo
Ben paſſid in a daie or two,
But knoppis wollin freſhè be
Two daies at leſt or ellis thre:
The knoppis gretely likid me,
For fairir maie there no man ſe;
Who ſo might havin one of all
It ought him ben ful leſe withall:
Might I garlonde of 'hem getten
For no richeſſe I wolde it letten.
Amonges the knoppis I cheſe one
So faire, that of the remenaunt none
Ne preiſe I halfe ſo wel as it
Whan I aviſin in my wit;
It ſo well was enluminid
With colour red, as well finid
As Nature couth it makin faire,
And it hath levis wel foure paire,
That Kind hath ſet through his knowing;
Aboute the redde roſis ſpringing
The ſtalke ywas as riſhè right,
And theron ſtode the knoppe upright,
That it ne bowed upon no ſide;
The ſotè ſmell yſprong ſo wide
That it died al the place aboute:
Whan I had ſmelled the ſavour ſote

No will had I fro thence yet go,
But ſomdele nere it went I tho
To take it, but mine honde for drede
Ne durſt I to the Roſè bede
For thiſteles ſharpe of many maners,
Nettis, thornis, and hokid briers,
For muche they diſtourblid me,
For ſore I dradde to harmid be.

The god of Love, with bowe ybent,
That al daie ſet had his talent
To purſue and to ſpyin me,
Was ſtondin by a figgè tre,
And whan he ſawè how that I
Had choſin ſo ententifely
The bothum more unto my pay
Than any othir that I ſay,
He toke an arowe ſharpely whette,
And in his bowe when it was ſette
He ſtreight up to his ere ydrough
The ſtrongè bowe that was ſo tough,
And ſhotte at me ſo wondir ſmerte
That through mine eye unto mine herte
The takil ſmote, and depe it wente,
And therwith al ſuch colde me hente
That undir clothis warme and ſofte
Sin that day I have chivered ofte.
Whan I was hurte thus in ſtounde
I fell doune plat unto the grounde,

Digitized by Google

Mine herte failid and faintid aſe,
And longè time in ſwoune I laie;
But whan I came out of ſwouning,
And hadde my witte and my feling,
I was all mate, and wende full wele
Of blode t' have lorne a full grete dele,
But certes the' arowe that in me ſtode
Of me ne drewe no droppe of blode;
For why? I ſounde my woundes all drie.
Than toke I with mine hondis tweie
The' arowe, and full faſt it out plight,
And in the pulling ſore I ſight;
So at the laſt the ſhaft of tre
I drough out with the fethirs thre,
But yet the hokid hedde i-wis,
The whiche Beaute ycallid is,
Gan ſo depe in mine hertè pace
That I it ne might not arace,
But in mine hertè ſtill it ſtode,
All bledde I not a droppe of blode:
I was bothe angwiſhous and trouble
For the perill that I ſawe double;
I ne wiſt what to ſaie or doe,
Ne get a leche my woundis to,
For neither thorough graſſe ne rote
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote,
But to the bothum evîr mo
Mine herte drewe, for all my wo

Digitized by Google

My thought was in none othir thing,
For had it ben in my keping
It would have brought my life again,
For certis evenly, I dare ſain,
The ſight onely and the ſavour
Aleggid moche of my langour.
Than gan I for to drawe me
Toward the bothum faire to ſe,
And Love had gette him in this throwe
An othir arowe into his bowe,
And for to ſhotin gan him dreſſe;
The arowes name was Simplenesſe:
And whan that Love gan nigh me nere
He drowe it up withoutin were,
And ſhote at me with all his might,
So that this arowe anone right
Throughout mine eigh, as it was founde,
Into mine herte hath made a woande:
Than I anone did all my craft
For to ydrawin out the ſhaft,
And therewithall I ſighid eſt;
But in mine hert the hedde was left,
Whiche aie encreſid my deſire;
Unto the bothum drowe I nere,
And evirmo that me was wo
The more deſire had I to go
Unto the roſir, where that grewe
The freſhe bothum ſo bright of hewe:

Digitized by Google

Bettir me were to' have lettin be,
But it behovid nedis me
To doen right as mine herte badde,
For er the body muſt be ladde
Aftir the herte in wele and wo,
Of force togithir thei muſt go;
But nevir this archir would fine
To ſhote at me with all his pine,
And for to make me to him mete.
The thirde arowe he gan to ſhete,
Whan beſt his time he might eſpie,
The whiche was namid Curtiſie,
Into mine herte he did avale:
A ſwoune I fell bothe dedde and pale;
Long time I laie, and ſtirid nought
Till I abraied out of my thought,
And faſte than I aviſid me
To drawin out the ſhaft of tre;
But aye the hedde was leſte behinde
For ought I couthe pull or winde;
So ſore it ſticked whan I was hit
That by no crafte I might it flit,
But anguiſhous and full of thought
I felt ſoche wo my wounde aie wrought,
That ſomoned me alwaie to go
Toward the Roſe that pleſed me ſo;
But I ne durſt in no manere,
Bicauſe the archir was ſo nere.

Digitized by Google

For evirmore gladly'; as I rede,
Brent child of fire hath mochil drede:
And certis yet for all my pein
Though that I figh, yet arowes rein,
And ground quarelis, sharpe of stele,
Ne for no pain that I might sele,
Yet might I not my self with hold
The fairè rosir to behold,
For Love me yave soche hardiment
For to fulfill his commaundement;
Upon my fete I rose up than
Feble as a forwounded man,
And forthe to gon my might I set,
And for the archir n'olde I let:
Toward the rosir fast I drowe,
But thornis sharpe mo than inow
There were, and also thistèles thicke,
And brerís brimmè for to pricke,
That I ne might ygettin grace
Through the rough thornis for to pace
To sene the rosis freshe of hewe;
I must abide though it me rewe:
The hedge about so thicke was,
That closed the rosis in compas.
But o thing likid me right wele,
I was so nigh that I might sele
Of the bothum the sote odour,
And also se the freshe coloure,

Digitized by Google

And that right gretely likid me
That I ſo nere mightin it ſe;
Soche joie anon thereof had I
That I forgate my malady;
To ſene it I had ſuche delire
Of woe and angre' I was all quite,
And of my woundes that I had there,
For nothing likin me might more
Than dwellin by the roſir aie,
And thens nevir to paſſe awaie:
But whan a while I had be thare
The god of Love, whiche all to ſhare
Mine herte with his arowis kene,
Caſteth him to yeve me woundis grene;
He ſhote at me ful haſtily
An arowe namid Compaſſie,
The whiche takil is full able
To make theſe ladies merciable;
Than I anon gan chaungin hewe
For grevaunce of my woundè newe,
That I again fell in ſwouning,
And ſighid ſore in complaining.
Sore I complainid that my ſore
On me gan grevin more and more;
I had none hope of allegiaunce,
So nigh I drowe to diſperaunce;
I ne rought of deth ne of life,
Whethir that Love ywould me drife;

Digitized by Google

If me a martir would he make
I might his powir not forſake:
And while for angir thus I woke
The god of Love an arowe toke;
Full ſharpe it was and full poinaunt,
And it was callid Faire Semblaunt,
The whiche in no wiſe would conſent
That any lovir him repent
To ſerve his love with herte and all
For any perill that maie fall:
But though this arowe was kene grounde
As any raſour that is founde
To cutte and kervin at the poinct,
The god of Love it had anoint
With a full precious ointment,
Some dele to yeve alegèment
Upon the woundis that he hade
Thorough the eye in my herte made,
To helpe ther ſoris and to cure,
And that thei maie the bette indure;
But yet this arowe without more
Made in mine herte a largè ſore,
That in full grete pain I abode,
But aie the ointment went abrode;
Throughout my woundis large and wide
It ſprede about in every ſide,
Thorough whoſe vertue and whoſe might
Mine herte joifull was and light;

Digitized by Google

I had ben dedde and all to ſhent
But for the precious ointment.
The ſhaft I drowe out of the arowe,
Roking for wo right wondir narowe,
But the hedde, whiche that made me ſmerte,
I left behindè in mine herte
With othir fower, I dare well ſaie,
That nevir woll be toke awaie;
But the ointment halpè me wele,
And yet ſoche ſorowe did I fele
That allè daie I chaungid howe
Of my woundis ſo freſhe and newe,
As men might ſe in my viſage:
The arowes were ſo full of rage,
So variaunt of diverſite,
That men in evèriche might ſe
Both grete anoie and eke ſweteneſſe,
And joie ymeint with bittirneſſe:
Now were thei eſy and now wode;
In them I felt bothe harme and gode;
Now ſore without alleggèment,
Now ſoftining with the ointment:
It ſoftenid here and prickid there;
Thus eſe and angir were yfere.

The god of Love delivirly
Came lepande to me haſtily,
And ſayid to me in grete jape,
Yelde the, for thou maie not eſcape,

Digitized by Google

Maie no defence availe the here,
Therefore I rede make no daungere:
If thou wolt yelde the haſtily
Thou ſhalt the rathir have mercie:
He is a fole in ſikerneſſe
That with daungir or with ſtoutneſſe
Rebellith there that he ſhould pleſe;
In ſoche folie is litle eſe:
Be meke where thou muſt nedis bowe;
To ſtrive ayen is not thy prowe:
Come at onis, and have idoe,
For I wollè that it be ſo;
Than yelde the here debonairly.
And I anſwerid full humbly,
All gladly, Sir, at your bidding
I woll me yelde in allè thing;
To your ſervice I woll me take,
For God defende that I ſhould make
Ayen your bidding reſiſtence;
I woll not doen ſo grete offence,
For if I did it were no ſkill;
Ye maie doe with me what ye will,
Or ſave or ſpill, and alſo ſlo;
Fro you in no wiſe may I go;
My life, my deth, is in your honde,
I maie not laſte out of your bonde;
Plaine at your liſte I yeldè me,
Hoping in hert that ſomtime ye

Digitized by Google

Comforte and eſe ſhul to me ſende,
Or els ſhortly, this is the ende,
Withoutin helth I mote aie dure
But if ye take me to your cure:
Comforte or helth how ſhould I have,
Sithe ye me hurte, but ye me ſave?
The helth of Love mote be yfounde,
Where as thei tokin firſt ther wounde;
And if ye liſte of me to make
Your priſoner, I woll it take
Of herte and will fully at gre:
Wholy and plaine I yeldè me,
Withoutin feining or feintiſe,
To be governed by your empriſe:
Of you I here ſo mochil priſe
I wol ben whole at your deviſe,
For to fulfill all your liking,
And to repentin for nothing,
Hoping to have yet in ſome tide
Mercy of that that I abide:
And with that covenaunt yelde I me,
Anon doune knelling on my kne,
Profiring for to kiſſe his fete,
But for nothing he would me lete:
And ſaid, I love the both and preiſe,
Sens that thine anſwere doth me eſe,
For thou anſwered ſo curtiſly;
For nowe I wote well uttirly

Digitized by Google

That thou art gentil by thy ſpeche,
For though a man ſerve wouldè ſeche,
He ſhould not findin in certaine
No ſuche anſwere of no vilaine,
For ſuche a worde ne mightè nought
Iſſue out of a vilaines thought:
Thou ſhalt not leſin of thy ſpeche,
For thy helping wollin I eche
And eke encreſin that I maie,
But firſt I woll that thou obaie
Fully for thine own avauntage
Anone to do me here homage,
And ſithin kiſſe thou ſhalt my mouthe,
Whiche to no vilaine was ner couthe
For to' aproche it ne for to touche,
For faufe of cherlis I ne vouche
That thei ſhal nevir neigh it nere;
For curteis and of faire manere,
Wel taught and ful of gentilneſſe,
He muſt yben that ſhall me kiſſe,
And alſo of ful highe fraunchiſe
That ſhal atteine to thât empriſe.
And firſt of o thing warne I the,
That paine and gret adverſite
He mote endure, and eke travaile,
That ſhal me ſerve withoutin faile;
But there againſt the to comforte,
And with thy ſervice to diſporte,

Thou maiſt ful glad and joyfull be
So gode a maiſter to' have as me,
And lordè of ſo high renoun;
I bere of Love the gonfenoun,
And of Curtiſie the banere,
For I am of ſelfe the manere,
Gentill and curteis, meke and fre,
That who evir ententiſe be
Me to honour, re-doute, and ſerve,
And alſo that he him obſerve
Fro treſpace and fro villanie,
And him governe in curtiſie,
With will and with entencion;
For when he firſt in my priſon
Is caught, than muſt he uttirly
Fro thennis-forth ful beſily
Ycaſt him gentill for to be
Yf he deſire helpe of me.
Anone withoutin more delaie,
Withoutin daungir or affraie,
I become his vaſſal anone,
And gave him thankes many a one,
And knelid doune with hondis joint,
And made it in my porte full queint:
The joye went to my hert'is rote
Whan I had kiſſed his mouthe ſo ſote;
I had ſuche mirth and ſuch liking
It curid me of languiſhing.

Digitized by Google

He aſked of me than hoſtages:
I have takin fele homages
Of one and othir where I have bene,
Diſtreinid ofte withoutin wene:
Theſe felons ful of falſite:
Have many ſithes begilid me,
And through falſhed ther luſt achived,
Wherof I repent and am greved:
And I 'hem gette in my daungere
Ther falſheed ſhul thei bie ful dere;
But for I love the' I ſaie the plaine
I woll of the be more certaine,
For the fore I woll now ybinde
That thou away ne ſhalt not winde
For to denien thy covenaunt
Or done that is not avenaunt:
That thou were falſe it were grete ruth,
Sithe thou ſemiſt ſo ful of truth.
Sir, if the liſte to underſtaunde
I merveile the' aſking this demaunde;
For why or wherefore ſhouldè ye
Hoſtage or borowes aſke of me,
Or any othir ſikirneſſe,
Sithin ye wote in ſothfaſtneſſe
That ye me have ſurpriſid ſo,
And whole mine herte takin me fro,
That it woll doe for me nothing
But if it be at your bidding?

Digitized by Google

Mine hert is yours, and mine right nought,
As it behoveth, in dede and thought,
Redy in all to worche your will,
Whethir ſo tourne to gode or ill;
So ſore it luſtith you to pleſe
No man therof maie you diſeſe;
Ye have theron ſet ſoche juſtice
That it' is werried in many wiſe;
And if ye doubt it n'olde obaie
Ye maie therof doe make a kaie
And hold it with you for hoſtage.
Now, certis, this is none outrage,
(Quod Love) and fully I accorde,
For of the body' he is full lorde
That hath the herte in his treſore;
Outrage it were to aſkin more.

Than of his aumener he drough
A little keie fetiſe inough,
Whiche was of gold poliſhid clere,
And ſaied to me, With this keie here
Thine herte to me now woll I ſhet,
For all thy joifull loke and knet
I binde undir this little keie,
That no wight maie cary awaie.
This keie is full of grete poſte,
With whiche anone he touchid me

Undir the ſide full ſoftily;
That he mine hertè ſodainly
Without any doute hath ſo ſpered
That yet right nought it hath me dered.
Whan he had doin his will all out,
And I had put him out of dout,
Sir, I ſaied, I have right grete will
Your luſt and pleſure to fulfill,
Loke ye my ſervice take at gre
By thilkè faith ye owe to me;
I ſaie nought for recreaundiſe,
For I nought doubt of your ſervice.
But the ſervaunt travaileth in vain
That for to ſervin doeth his pain
Unto that lorde whiche in no wiſe
Conne him no thanke for his ſervice.

Love ſayid tho, Diſmaie, the nought;
Sithe thou for ſuccour haſt me ſought.
In thanke thy ſervice woll I take,
And high of degre woll the make,
If Wickidneſſe ne hindir the,
But (as I hope) it ſhall nought be:
To worſhip no wight by' aventure
Maie come but that he pain endure:
Abide and ſuffre thy diſtreſſe
That hurtith now; it ſhall be leſſe:

Digitized by Google

I wote my ſelf what maie the ſave,
What medicine thou wouldiſt have.
And if thy truth to me thou kepe
I ſhall unto thine helping eke,
To cure thy wounded and make 'hem clene,
Where ſo that thei be old or grene:
Thou ſhalt be holpen', at wordis few,
For certainly thou ſhalt well ſhewe
Where that thou ſerviſt with gode will,
For to accompliſhe and fulfill
My commaundementis daie and night,
Whiche I to lovirs yeve of right.

Ah Sir! for Godd'is love (ſaied I)
Er ye paſſe hens ententifely
Your commaundementes to me ye ſaie,
And I ſhall kepe 'hem if I maie,
For them to kepen' is all my thought;
And if ſo be I wote 'hem nought
Than maie I erre unwittingly;
Wherfore I praie you entirely
With all mine herte me for to lere,
That I treſpace in no manere.
The god of Love than chargid me
Anon, as ye ſhall here and ſe
Wordè by worde, by right empriſe,
So as The Romaunt ſhall deviſe.

Digitized by Google

The maiſtir leſith time to lere
Whan the diſciple woll not here;
It is but vain on him to ſwinke
That on his lerning woll not thinke:
Who ſo luſt love let him intende,
For now The Romance ginneth to' amende.
Now is gode to herin in faie,
If any be that can it faie,
And poinct it as the reſon is
Yſet, for othir gaţe i-wis
It ſhall nat well in allè thing
Be brought to gode underſtanding;
For a reder that poinctith ill
A gode ſentence maie oftin ſpill.
The boke is gode at the ending,
Ymade of newe and luſtie thing,
For who ſo woll the ending here
The craft of Love he ſhall now lere,
If that he woll ſo long abide
Till I this Romance maie unhide,
And undoe the ſignifiaunce
Of this dremè into Romaunce:
The ſothfaſtneſſe that now is hid
Without coverture ſhall be kid
Whan I undoen have this dreming,
Wherein no wordè is of leſing.

Digitized by Google

Villanie at the beginning
I woll, ſaied Love, ovir all thing
Thou leve, if that thou wolt ybe
Falſe, and treſpace ayeniſt me:
I curſe and blame generally
All them that lovin villanie,
For villanie makith villaine,
And by his dedes a chorle is ſeine.
  Theſe villains arne without pite,
Frendſhip and love, and all bounte:
I n'ill receive to my ſervice
Them that ben vilains of empriſe.
  But undirſtonde in thine entent
That this is not mine entendement
To clepin no wight in no age
Onely gentill for his linage,
But who ſo that is vertuous,
And in his port not outrageous;
Whan ſoche one thou ſeeſt the beforne,
Though he be not gentill yborne,
Thou mayiſt well ſeine this in ſoth
That he' is gentill, bicauſe he doth
As longith to a gentil man;
Of them none othir deme I can,
For certainly withoutin drede
A chorle is demid by his dede
Of hie or lowe, as ye maie ſe,
Or of what kinrid that he be;

Digitized by Google

Ne ſaie nought for non evill will
Thing which that is to holdin ſtill:
It is no worſhip to miſſeie,
Thou maieſt enſample take of Keie,
That was ſomtime for miſſaying
Yhatid bothe of old and yong:
As ferre as Gawein the worthie
Was praiſid for his curtiſie
Kaie was hatid, for he was fell,
Of worde diſpitous and cruell;
Wherefore be wiſe and aqueintable,
Godelie of worde, and reſonable,
Bothè to leſſe and eke to mare;
And whan thou comiſt there men are
Loke that thou have in cuſtome aie
Firſt to ſalue 'hem if thou maie;
And if it fall that of 'hem ſomme
Salue the firſt, be thou not domme,
But quite him curtiſly anon,
Without abiding, er thei gon.
For nothing eke thy tong applie
To ſpekin wordes of ribaudrie:
To vilaine ſpeche in no degre
Late not thy lippe unboundin be,
For I nought holde him in gode faith
Curteis that foulè wordis ſaith.
And allè women ſerve and preiſe,
And to thy power ther honour reiſe;

And if that any miſſayere
Diſpiſe women that thou maiſt here,
Blame him, and bidde him holde him ſtill;
And ſette thy might and al thy will
Women and ladies for to pleſe,
And to do thing that may 'hem eſe,
That thei evir ſpeke gode of the,
For ſo thou maiſt beſt praiſid be.
Loke that fro pride thou kepe the wele,
For thou maiſt both perceive and fele
That pride is both foly and ſinne;
And he that pride hath him within
Ne may his hertè in no wiſe
Mekin, ne ſouplin to ſervice,
For pride is founde in every parte
Contrarie unto Lov'is arte;
And he that lovith truily
Should him contein̄ jolily
Withoutin pride in ſondry wiſe,
And him diſguiſin in queintice;
For queinte aray, withoutin drede,
Is nothing proude, who takith hede,
For freſhe aray, as men may ſe,
Withoutin pride may oftin be.
Maintaine thy ſelfe aftir thy rent
Of robè and eke of garment,
For many a ſithe faire clothing
A man amendith in muche thinge.

Digitized by Google

And loke alway that thei be ſhape
(What garment that thou ſhalt the make)
Of him that can the beſt ydo,
With al that parteinith therto,
Pointis and ſleves be wel ſittande
Ful right and ſtreight upon the hande:
Of ſhone and botis newe and faire
Loke at the leſt thou have a paire,
And that thei ſitte ſo fetouſly
That theſe rude men may uttirly
Mervaile, ſith that thei ſitte ſo plaine,
How thei come on or of againe:
Were ſtreightè glovis, with aumere
Of ſilke: and alway with gode chere
Thou yeve, if that thou have richeſſe,
And if thou have nought ſpende the leſſe:
Alway be mery if thou maie,
But waſtè not thy gode alwaie:
Have hatte of flouris freſhe as May,
Chapelet of roſis of' Whitſondaie,
For ſoche araie coſtnith but lite:
Thine hondis waſhe, thy tethe make white,
And let no filthe upon the be:
Thy nailis blacke if thou maieſt ſe
Voide it awaie delivirly;
And kembe thine hedde right jolily:
Farce not thy viſage in no wiſe,
For that of Love is nat th' empriſe,

Digitized by Google

For Love doeth hatin, as I finde,
A beautie that cometh nat of kinde:
Alwaie in herte I redè the
Full glad and mery for to be,
And be as joifull as thou can;
Love hath no joie of ſorowfull man,
That ill is full of curtiſie,
That knowith in his maladie
For evir of love the ſickeneſſe
Is meint with ſwete and bittirneſſe.
The ſore of love is mervailous,
For now the lovir is joious,
Now can he plain, now can he grone,
Now can he ſinge, now makin mone;
To daie he plaineth for hevineſſe,
To morue' he plaineth for jolineſſe.
The life of love is full contrarie,
Whiche ſtoundè melè can oftin varie;
But if thou canſt mirthis make
That men in gre woll gladly take
Doe it godely, I commaunde the;
For men ſhould, whete ſo er thei be,
Doe thing that 'hem befitting is,
For therof cometh gode loos and pris;
Wherof that thou be vertuous
Ne be nat ſtraunge ne daungerous;
For if that thou gode ridir be
Pricke gladly that men maie the ſe;

Digitized by Google

In armis alſo if thou conne
Purſue till thou a name haſt wonne:
And if thy voice be faire and clere
Thou ſhalt makin no grete daungere;
Whan the to ſing thei gödely praie.
It is thy worſhip for to' obaie:
Alſo to you it longith aie
To harpe and giterne, daunce and plaie;
For if he can well-fote and daunce
It maie him gretely doe avaunce,
Emong eke for thy ladie ſake
Songis and complaintes that thou make,
For that woll mevin in her herte
Whan that thei redin of thy ſmerte:
Loke that no man for ſcarce the holde;
For that maie greve the manifolde;
Reſon woll that a lovir be
In his yeftis more large and fre
Than chorles that ben not of loving;
For who therof can ony thing
He ſhall be lefe aie for to yeve,
In londis lore who ſo would leve,
For he that through a ſodain ſight,
Or for a kiſſing anon right,
Yave whole his herte in will and thought,
And to himſelf kepith right nought,
Aftir this ſwift gift 'tis but reaſon
He give his gode too in a-bandon.

Digitized by Google

Now woll I ſhortly here reherce
Of that I have yſaied in verce
Allè the ſentence by and by
In wordis fewe compendiouſly,
That thou the bet maieſt on 'hem thinke
Wher ſo it be thou wake or winke,
For the wordis do little greve
A man to kepe whan thei be breve.
Who ſo with Love woll gon or ride
He mote be curteis, voide of pride,
Merie, and full of jolite,
And of largeſſe a loſid be.
Firſt I joigne the here in penaunce
That evir without repentaunce
Thou ſet thy thought in thy loving
To laſt withoutin repenting,
And think upon thy mirthis ſwete
That ſhall folue' aftir whan ye mete.
And for thou true to Love ſhalt be
I will and eke commaundè the
That in one place thou ſet all whole
Thine herte, withoutin halfin dolè,
For trecherie and ſikirneſſe,
For I loved nevir doublenoſſe.
To many' his herte that woll depart
Everiche ſhall have but little part,
But of him drede I me right nought
That in one placè ſettith his thought;

Digitized by Google

Therefore in o place thou it ſet,
And let it nevir thennis flet,
For if thou yeveſt it in lening
I holde it but a wretchid thing,
Therfore yevith it whole and quite,
And thou ſhalt have the more merite;
If it be lent than aftir ſeen
The bountè and the thanke is doen;
But in love a fre yevin thing
Requirith a grete guerdoning.
Yeve it in yeft all quite fully,
And make thy gift debonairly,
For men that yeft holdin more dere
That yevin is with gladſome chere.
That giftè nought to praiſin is
That a man gevith mal gre his.
Whan thou haſt yeven thine hert (as I
Have ſaid the here all opinly)
Than aventuris ſhull the fall
Whiche hard and hevy ben with all;
For ofte whan thou bethinkeſt the
Of thy loving, where ſo thou be,
Fro folke thou muſt depart in hie,
That none perceive thy maladie,
But hide thine harme thou muſt alone
And go forth ſole and make thy mone.
Thou ſhalt no while be in o ſtate,
But whilom colde and whilom hate,

Digitized by Google

Now red as roſe, now yelowe and ſade:
Such ſorow I trow thou ner had;
Cotidien ne the quarteine
It is not half ſo full of peine;
For oftin timis it ſhal fal
In love, among thy painis al,
That thou thy ſelfin all wholly
Foryettin ſhalt ſo uttirly
That many timis thou ſhalt be
Still as an image made of tre,
Domme as a ſtone, without ſtering
Of fote or honde, without ſpeking.
And than ſone eftir al thy paine
To memo'rie ſhalt thou come againe,
A man abaſhid wondir ſore,
And aftir ſighin more and more;
For wit thou wele withoutin wene
In ſuche aſtate ful ofte have bene
That have the' evill of love aſſaide,
Where thorough thou art ſo diſmaide.

Aftir a thought ſhal take the ſo
That thy love is to ferre the fro,
Thou ſhalt ſa (God) what may this be
That I ne may my lady ſe?
Mine hert alone is to her go,
And I abide al ſole in wo,

Digitized by Google

Departid fro mine ownè thought,
And with mine eyin ſe right nought.
Alas! mine eien ſene I ne may
My carefull hertè to convay;
Mine hert'is guidè but thei be
I praiſe nothing what er thei ſe;
Shul thei abidin than? why, nay,
But gone and ſe without delay
That whiche mine hert deſirith ſo,
For certainly but if thei go
A fole my ſelfè I may well holde
Whan I ne ſe what mine hert wolde,
Wherfore I wol gone her to ſene,
Or eſid ſhall I nevir bene
But that I have ſome tokining.
Than goſt thou forth without dwelling;
But ofte thou faileſt of thy deſire
Er thou maiſt come her any nere,
And waſtiſt in vaine thy paſſage;
Than faliſt thou in a newe rage;
For want of ſight thou ginniſt murne,
And homwarde penſife doſt returne.
In grete miſchefe than ſhalt thou be,
For than againe ſhal come to the
Sighis and plaintis, with newe wo,
That no itching prickith the ſo;
Who wote it nought he maie go lere
Of them that buyin love ſo dere.

Digitized by Google

No thing thine hert appesin maie,
That oft thou wolt gone and assaie
If thou maist sene by aventure
Thy liv'is joye, thine hert'is cure;
So that by grace if that thou might
Attaine of her to have a sight,
Than shalt thou done non othir dede
But with that sight thine eyin sede.
That fairè freshe whan thou maist se
Thine hert shal so ravishid be
That ner thou woldest thy thankis lete,
Ne remove for to se that swete:
The more thou seest, in sothfastnesse,
The more thou coviteſt that sweteneſſe;
The more thine herte brennith in fire
The more thine herte is in desire,
For who considrith every dele
It may be likened wondir wele
The paine of love unto a fere,
For evirmore thou neighist nere
In thought, or how so that it be,
(For very sothe I tel it the)
The hotter evir shal thou brenne,
As experience shall the kenne;
Where so comist in any coste
Who is next fire he brennith moste:
And yet forsothe for al thine hete,
Though thou for lovè swelte and swete,

Digitized by Google

Ne for no thing thou ſelin may;
Thou ſhalt not wille to paſſe away;
And though thou go, yet muſt the nede
Thinkin al day on her faire hede
Whom thou behelde with ſo gode will,
And holde thy ſelfe begilid ill
That thou ne haddeſt none hardiment
To ſhewe her aught of thine entent;
Thine hert ful ſore thou wolt diſpiſe,
And eke repreve of cowardiſe,
That thou ſo dull in every thing
Were domme for drede without ſpeking.
Thou ſhalt eke thinke thou diddeſt foly
That thou were her ſo faſtè bie
And durſt not venture the to ſay
Some thing er that thou came away,
For thou haddiſt no morè wonne
To ſpeke of her whan thou begonne;
But yet if ſhe would for thy ſake
In armis godely the have take,
It ſhould have be more worthe to the
Than of treſour a grete plente.
Thus ſhalt thou morne and eke complaine,
And get encheſon to'gon againe
Unto thy walke or to thy place
Where thou behelde her fleſhly face;
And n'ere for falſe ſuſpection
Thou woldiſt finde occaſion

Digitized by Google

For to gone in unto her houſe;
Thou arnè than ſo deſirous
A ſight of her but for to have,
If thou thine honour mightiſt ſave,
Or any erande mightiſt make
Thidir for thy lov'is ſake,
Ful faine thou woldiſt, but for drede
Thou goeſt not, leſt that men take hede;
Wherfore I redè in thy going,
And alſo' in thine again commaing,
Thou be wel ware that men ne wit;
Feinè the othir cauſe than it
To go that waie, or faſtè bie;
To helin wel is no folie;
And if ſo be it happè the
That thou thy love there maiſtie yſe,
In ſikir wiſe thou her ſalewe,
Wherwith thy coloure woll tranſmewe,
And eke thy bloud ſhal al to quake,
Thy hewe eke chaungin for her ſake,
But worde and wit, with chere ful pale,
Shul want for to tellin thy tale;
And if thou maiſt ſo ferforth winne
That thou to reſon durſt beginne,
And woldiſt ſaine thre thinges or mo,
Thou ſhalt ful ſcarſly ſaine the two;
Though thou bethinke the ner ſo wele
Thou ſhalt foryetin yet ſomdele.

Digitized by Google

But if thou dele with trechery,
For falſe lovirs mowe all fully
Sain what 'hem luſt withoutin dred,
Thei be ſo double' in ther falſhed,
For thei in hert can thinke o thing
And ſaine an othre' in ther ſpeking:
And whan thy ſpeche is endid all
Right thus to the it ſhal befall;
If any worde than come to minde
That thou to ſay haſt left behinde,
Than thou ſhalt brenne in grete martire,
For thou ſhalt brenne as any fire:
This is the ſtrife and eke the' affraie,
And the batill, that laſtith aie:
This bargaine ende may nevir take
But if that ſhe thy pece wil make.
And whan the night is come anon
A thouſande angres ſhal come on:
To bed as faſt thou wolte the dight,
Where thou ſhalt have but ſmal delight,
For whan thou weniſt for to ſlepe
So ful of painè ſhalt thou crepe,
Sterte in thy bed about ful wide,
And turne ful ofte on every ſide,
Now dounward groufe, and now upright,
And walow in wo the long night:

Thine armis ſhalt thou ſprede a brede
As man in warre were forwerede;
Than ſhal the come a remembraunce
Of her ſhape and of her ſemblaunce,
Wherto none othir may be pere:
And wete thou wel withoutin were
That the ſhal ſe ſomtime that night
That thou haſt her that is ſo bright
Nakid bitwene thine armis there,
Al ſothfaſtneſſe as though it were:
Thou ſhalt make caſtels than in Spaine,
And dreme of joy al but in vaine,
And the delitin of right nought
While thou ſo ſlombriſt in that thought
That is ſo ſwete and delitable,
The whiche in ſothe n'is but a fable,
For it ne ſhall no while laſt;
Than ſhalt thou ſighe and wepe faſt,
And ſay, Dere God! what thing is this?
My dreme is turnid al amis
Whiche was ful ſwete and apparent,
But now I wake it is al ſhent;
Now yede this mery thought away;
Twenty timis upon a day
I would this thought would come againe,
For it alegith wel my paine;
It maketh me ful of joyfull thought;
It ſleeth me that it laſtith nought:

Digitized by Google

Ah Lorde! whi n'il ye me ſocoure?
The joye I trowe that I langoure,
The deth I would me ſhouldè ſlo
While I lie in her armis two:
Mine harme is harde withoutin wene,
My gret uneſe ful ofte I mene.

But wouldè Love do ſo I might
Have fully joye of her ſo bright
My paine were quitte me richily.
Alas! to gret a thing aſke I;
It is but foly' and wrong wening
To aſke ſo outrageous a thing,
And who ſo aſkith ſolily
He mote be warnid haſtily;
And I ne wote what I may ſay,
I am ſo ferre out of the way,
For I would have ful grete liking
And ful grete joy of laſſè thing;
For would ſhe of her gentilneſſe
Withoutin more me onis keſſe
It were to me a grete guerdon,
Releſe of all my paſſion:
But it is harde to come therto;
Al is but foly that I do;
So highe I have mine hertè ſette
Where that I may no comfort gette:

Digitized by Google

I n'ote wher I ſay well or nought,
But this I wote well in my thought,
That it were bette of her alone
For to ſtintin my wo and mone:
A loke on her I caſt godely
Than for to have al uttirly
Of an othir al whole the play.
Ah Lord! where I ſhal bide the day
That ere ſhe ſhal my lady be?
He is ful cured that may her ſe.
Ah God! whan ſhal the dauning ſpringe?
To liggin thus is angry thing;
I have no joy thus here to lie
Whan that my love is not me bie:
A man to lien hath grete diſeſe
Which maie not ſlepe ne reſt in eſe:
I would it dawed and were now day,
And that the night were went away,
For were it daye I would up riſe:
Ah ſlowè ſonne! ſhewe thine enpriſe;
Spede the to ſprede thy bemis bright,
And chace the derkneſſe of the night,
To put away the ſtoundis ſtrong
Whiche in me laſtin al to long.
The night ſhalt thou continne ſo
Withoutin reſt, in paine and wo;
If er thou knew of love diſtreſſe
Thou mowe lerne it in that ſikeneſſe;

Digitized by Google

And thus enduring ſhalt thou lie,
And riſe on morow up erly
Out of thy bed, and harneis the
Er evir dawning thou maiſt ſe;
Al privily than ſhalt thou gone,
What wethre' it be, thy ſelfe alone,
For reine or haile, for ſnowe for flete;
Thidir ſhe dwelleth that is ſo ſwete,
The whiche maie fal a ſlepè be,
And thinkith but lite upon the:
Than ſhalt thou go, ful ſoule aferde,
Loke if the gatè be unſperde,
And waite without in woe and paine,
Ful ill a colde in winde and raine:
Than ſhalt thou go the dore before,
If thou maiſte findin any ſhore,
Or hole, or reſte, what ere it were;
Than ſhalt thou ſtoupe and lay to ere
If they within a ſlepè be,
I mene al ſave thy lady fre,
Whom waking if thou maiſt aſpie
Go put thy ſelfe in jupardie,
To àſkin grace and the himene,
That ſhe maie wete withoutin wene
That thou all night no reſt haſt had,
So ſore for her thou were beſtad.
Women wel ought pite to take
Of them that ſorowen for ther ſake:

And loke for love of that relike
That thou thinkè none othir like,
For whan thou haſt ſo gret anney
Shall kiſſe the er thou go awey,
And hold that in ful grete deinte:
And for that no man ſhall the ſe
Before the houſe ne in the way,
Loke thou be gon againe er day:
Suchè comming and ſuche going,
Suche hevineſſe and ſuche walking,
Makith lovirs withoutin wene
Undir ther clothis pale and lene.
Love ne leveth colourd ne clereneſſe;
Who lovith trewe hath no faineſſe.
Thou ſhalt wel by thy ſelfin ſe
That thou muſt nedes affayid be,
For men that ſhape hem othir way
Falſely ther ladies to betray.
No wondir is though thei be fatte,
With falſe othis ther loves thei gatte;
For ofte I ſe ſuche loſingeours
Fattir than abottes or priours.
Yet with o thing I wolle the charge,
That is to ſay, that thou be large
Unto the maide that her doth ſerve;
So beſt her thanke thou ſhalte deſerve:
Yeve her geftis, and get her grace,
For ſo thou may thankè purchace,

Digitized by Google

That ſhe the worthy holde and fre,
Thy lady' and al that may the ſe:
Alſo her ſervauntes worſhip aie,
And pleſin as muche as thou maie;
Grete gode through them may come to the,
Bicauſe with her thei ben prive;
Thei ſhal her tel how thei the fande
Curteis and wiſe, and wel doande,
And ſhe ſhal preiſe the wel the more:
Loke out of londe thou be not fore,
And if ſuche cauſe thou have that the
Behoveth to gone out of countre,
Leave wholely thine hert in hoſtage
Til thou againe make thy paſſage:
Thinke long to ſe the ſwete thing
That hath thine hert in her keping.
Now have I tolde the in what wiſe
A lovir ſhal do me ſervice;
Do it than if that thou wolt have
The mede that thou doſt aſtir crave.

Whan Love al this had bodin me
I ſaid him, Sir, how may it be
That lovirs may in ſuche manere
Endure the paine ye have ſaid here?
I marvailin me wondir faſte
How any man may live or laſte
In ſuche paine and in ſuche brenning,
In ſorue' and thought, and ſuche ſighing,

Digitized by Google

Aie unreleſid wo to make
Wher ſo it be thei ſlepe or wake;
In ſuche anoy continuelly;
As helpe me God this mervaile I
How man, but he were made of ſtele,
Might live a monthe ſuch paines to fele.

The god of Love than ſaid to me;
Frende, by the faith I owe to the
May no man have gode but he' it bie:
A man lovith more tendirlie
The thing that he hath bought moſt dere;
For wete thou well withoutin were
In thanke that thing is takin more
For which a man hath ſuffrid ſore:
Certis no wo ne may attaine
Unto the ſore of lov'is paine,
None evil therto may amounte,
No more than a man may counte
The droppes that of the watir be,
For drie as wel the gretè ſe
Thou mightiſt as the harmis tell
Of all them that with Love ydwell
In ſervice, for peinè them ſleeth,
And that eche wouldè fle the deeth,
And trowe thei ſhould nevir eſcape,
Ne were that hope ycouth 'hem make

Digitized by Google

Glad as a man in priſon ſete
And maie not gettin for to ete
But barlie bred and watir pure,
And lieth in vermin and ordure:
With allè this yet can he live,
Gode hope ſuche comfort hath him yeve,
Whiche makith wene that he ſhal be
Releſed and come to liberte:
In Fortune is fully his truſt
Although he lie in ſtrawe or duſt;
In hope is al his ſuſtaining:
So fare lovirs in ther wenning
Whiche Love hath ſhitte in his priſoun,
Gode hope is ther ſalvacioun;
Gode hope (how ſorè that thei ſmerte)
Yevith 'hem bothè will and herte
T'offre ther bodie to martyre,
For hope ſo ſore doth 'hem deſire
To ſuffre' eche harme that men deviſe
For joye that aftirwards ſhall riſe.

Hope in deſire catche victory,
In hope of Love' is al the glory,
For hope is all that Love maie yeve;
N'ere hope there ſhould no lengir live:
Bleſſid be hope! whiche with deſire
Avaunceth lovirs in ſuche manire.

Digitized by Google

Gode hope is curteiſe for to pleſe,
To kepe lovirs from all diſeſe:
Hope kepeth his londe, and woll abide
For any peril maie betide,
For hope to lovirs, as moſt chefe,
Doth 'hem endurin all miſchefe;
Hope is ther helpe whan miſtir is;
And I ſhal yeve the eke i-wis
Thre othir thinges that grete ſolace
Doth to them that be in my lace.
The firſt gode that maie be yfounde
To them that in my lace be bounde
Is ſwetè thought, for to recorde
Thingè wherwith thou canſt accorde
Beſt in thine herte, whethir ſhe be
Thinking in abſence gode to the.
Whan any lovir doth complaine,
And livith in diſtreſſe and paine,
Than ſwetè thought ſhal come as blive
Awaie his angre for to drive;
It maketh lovirs have remembraunce
Of comforte and of highe pleſaunce
That hope hath hight him for to winne;
For thought anone than ſhal beginne,
As ferre God wot as he can finde,
To make a mirrour of his minde,
For to beholde he wol not let,
Her perſon he ſhal fore him ſet,

Digitized by Google

Her laughing eyen perſaunt and clere,
Her ſhape, her forme, her godely chere,
Her mouthe, that is ſo gracious,
So ſwete, and eke ſo ſavirous,
Of al her fetirs ſhal take hede,
His eyen with al her limmis fede.
Thus ſwete thinking ſhall aſwage
The paine of lovirs and ther rage;
Thy joye ſhal double without geſſe
Whan thou thinkeſt on her ſemelineſſe,
Or of her laughing or her chere,
That to the made thy lady dere:
This comforte wol I that thou take,
And if the nexte thou wolte forſake,
Which is not leſſe ſavirous,
Thou ſhouldeſt not ben to daungirous.

The ſecond ſhal be ſwetè ſpeche,
That hath to many one be leche,
To bring 'hem out of wo and were,
And helpe many a bachilere,
And many'a lady ſent ſocour,
That hath ylovid paramoure,
Thorough ſpeking (whan thei might here)
Of ther lovirs to them ſo dere;
To me it voidith al ther ſmerte
The whiche is cloſid in ther herte;

Digitized by Google

In hert it maketh 'hem glad and light,
Speche, whan thei mowe not havin ſight;
And therfore nowe it cometh to minde
In oldè dawis, as I finde,
That clerkis writtin that her knewe
There was a lady freſhe of hewe
Whiche of her love madin a ſong,
On him for to remembre' among,
In which ſhe ſaid, Whan that I here
Spekin of him that is ſo dere
To me it voidith allè ſmerte;
Iwis he ſitteth ſo nere mine herte,
To ſpek of him at eve or morowe
It curith me of al my ſorowe;
To me is none ſo high pleſaunce
As of his perſon daliaunce.
She wiſt ful wel that ſwete ſpeking
Comfortith in ful mochil thing;
Her love ſhe had full well aſſaide,
Of him ſhe was ful wel apaide;
To ſpeke of him her joye was ſet:
Therefore I rede the that thou get
A felowe that can wel concele
And kepe thy counſaile, and welle hele,
To whom go ſhewe wholly thine herte,
Both wele and woe, and joye and ſmerte:
To get comforte to him thou go,
And privily bitwene you two

Digitized by Google

Ye ſhal ſpeke of that godely thing
That hath thine hert in her keping,
Of her beaute and her ſemblaunce,
And of her godely countinaunce;
Of al thy ſtate thou ſhalt him ſaie,
And aſke him counſaile how thou maie
Do any thing that maie her pleſe,
For it to the ſhal do gret eſe,
That he maie wete thou truſt him ſo
Both of thy wele and of thy wo;
And if his herte to love be ſette
His companie is moche the bette,
For reſon wol he ſhewe to the
Al uttirly his privite,
And what ſhe is he lovith ſo
To the plainly he ſhal undo,
Withoutin drede of any ſhame
Both tel her renome and her name;
Than ſhall he forthir ferre and nere,
And namely to thy lady dere
In ſikir wiſe ye every other
Shal helpin as his ownè brother
In trouthe withoutin doubleneſſe,
And kepin cloſe in ſikirneſſe;
For it is noble thing in fay
To have a man thou darſtè ſay
Thy privy counſaile every dele,
For that woll comforte the right wele;

Digitized by Google

And thou ſhalt holde the wel apaied
Whan ſuche a frende thou haſt aſſaied.

The thirdè gode of grete comfort,
That yevith lovirs moſt diſport,
Comith of ſight and beholding,
That is yclepid Swete Loking,
The whichè may none eſe ydo
Whan thou art ferre thy lady fro,
Wherfore thou preſe alway to be
In placè where thou maiſt her ſe,
For it is thing moſt amirous
Moſte delitable' and favirous,
For to aſſwage a mann'is ſorow
To ſene his lady by the morow;
For it is a ful noble thing
Whan that thine eyin have meting
With that relike ſo precious
Whereof thei be ſo deſirous.
But al daie aftir ſothe it is
Thei have no drede to faren amis;
Thei dredin neithir winde ne raine,
Ne non othir manir of paine;
For whan thine eyen were thus in bliſſe
Yet of ther curtiſie iwiſſe
Alone thei can not have ther joye,
But to the hertè thei convoye

Digitized by Google

Parte of ther bliſſe, to him thou ſende
Of all this harme to make amende.
The eye is a gode meſſangere,
Which can to the' hert in ſuche manere
Tidingis ſende, that he hath ſene
To voide him of his painis clene,
Wherof the hert rejoyſith ſo
That a grete partie of his wo
Is voided, and put away to flight;
Right as the derkneſſe of the night
Is chaſed with clereneſſe of the mone,
Right ſo is al his wo ful ſone
Devoidid clene whan that the ſight
Beholdin may that freſhè wight
Whiche that the hert deſirith ſo,
That al his derkeneſſe is ago,
For than the herte is all at eſe
When thei ſene that that maie 'hem pleſe.
Now have I declared the al out
Of that thou were in drede and doute,
For I have tolde the faithfully
What the may curin uttirly,
And al lovirs that wollin be
Faithful and of ſtabilite;
Gode Hope alway kepe by thy ſide,
And Swetè Thought make eke abide,
Swetè Loking and Swetè Speche,
Of al thine harmes thei ſhal be leche:

Digitized by Google

Of bale thou ſhalt have grete pleſaunce
Yf thou canſt bide in ſuffiraunce,
And ſervin wele without feintiſe;
Thou ſhalt be quite of thine empriſe
With more guerdoun if that thou live,
But al this time this I the yeve.

The god of Love, whan al the day
He' had taught me as ye have herd ſay,
And enformid compendiouſly,
He vaniſhid al ſodainly,
And I alone yleſte al ſole,
So full of complaint and of dole,
For I ſawe no man there me by.
My woundes me grevid wondirſly;
Me for to cure nothing I knewe
Save the bothum ſo bright of hewe,
Wheron was ſette wholly my thought;
Of othir comforte knewe I nought,
But it were through the god of Love;
I knew nat elſe to my behove
That might me eſe or comfort gette
But if he would him entermette.
The roſir was withoutin dout
Ycloſid with an hedge without,
As ye to forne have herde me ſaine,
And faſt I beſied, and would faine

Digitized by Google

Have paſſid the hay, if I might
Have gettin in by any ſleight,
To the bothum ſo faire to ſe,
But evir I dradde blamed to be
Yf men would have ſuſpection
That I would of entencion
Have ſtole the roſis that there were,
Therfore to entre' I was in fere;
But at the laſte, as I bethought
Whethir I ſhuldè paſſe or nought,
I ſawe come, with a gladdè chere,
To me a luſty bachilere
Of gode ſtature and of gode height,
And Bialacoil forſoth he height;
Sonnè he was to Curtiſie,
And he me grauntid ful gladlie
The paſſage of the uttir hay,
And ſaidè, Sir, how that ye may
Paſſe, if that it your wille ybe,
The freſhè roſir for to ſe,
And ye the ſwetè favour fele,
Your warrant I may be right wele;
So thou the kepin fro folie
Shal no man do the vilanie;
Yf I maie helpin you in ought
I ſhall not faine, dredith right nought,
For I am bounde to your ſervice
Fully devoide of all feintiſe.

Digitized by Google

Than unto Bialacoil faide I,
I thanke you, Sir, ful hertily,
And your beheſt I take at gre
That ye ſo godely profir me;
To you it cometh of grete fraunchiſe
That ye me profir your ſerviſe.
Than aftir ful delivirly
Through the breris anone went I
Wherof encombrid was the haie;
I was well pleſed, the ſothe to ſaie,
To ſe the bothum faire and ſote
So freſhe yſprong out of the rote.

And Bialacoil me ſervid wele
Whan I ſo nigh me mightin fele
Of the bothum the ſwete odoure,
And ſo luſty hewed of coloure;
But than a chorle, foule him betide!
Beſide the roſis gan him hide,
To kepe the roſis of that roſere,
Of whom the namè was Daungere.
This chorle was hid there in the greves,
Ycovirid with graſſe and leves,
To ſpie and take whom that he fonde
Unto that roſir put an honde.
He was not ſole, for there was mo,
For with him werin othir two

Digitized by Google

Of wickid manirs and ill fame;
That one was clepid by his name
Wickid Tonge, God yeve him ſorowe!
For neithir at eve ne at morowe
He can of no man gode yſpeke;
On many' a juſte man doth he wreke.
There was a woman that eke hight
Shamè, that who can rekin right
Treſpace ywas her fathir's name,
Her mothir Reſon; thus was Shame
Ybrought forth of theſe ilkè two,
And yet had Treſpace nere adoe
With Reſon, ne nere leie her by,
He was hidous and ſo ugly;
I menè this, that Treſpace hight,
But Reſon conceveth of a ſight
That Shame of which I ſpake aforne:
And whan that Shame was thus yborne
It was ordained that Chaſtite
Should of the roſir lady be,
Whiche of the bothums more and las
With ſondrie folke aſſailid was,
That ſhe ne wiſtè what to doe,
For Venus her aſſaileth ſo
That night and daie fro her ſhe ſtall
Bothoms and roſis ovir all:
To Reſon than praieth Chaſtite,
Whom Venus hath flemed ore the ſe,

That ſhe her doughtir would her lene
To kepe the roſir freſhe and grene.
Anon Reſon to Chaſtite
Is fully' aſſentid that it be,
And grauntid her at her requeſt
That Shame, bicauſe ſhe is honeſt,
Shall kepir of the roſir be;
And thus to kepe it there were thre,
That none ſhould hardie be ne bolde
(Were he yongè or were he olde)
Again her will awaie to bere
Bothoms ne roſis that there were.
I had well ſped had I nat ben
Awaitid with theſe thre and ſene,
For Bialacoil, that was ſo faire,
So gracious and debonaire,
Quitte him to me ful curtiſly,
And me to pleſin bądde that I
Should drawè to the bothom nere;
Preſe in to touchin the roſere
Whiche bare the Roſe he yaſe me leve;
This graunt ne might but litill greve;
And for he ſawe it likid me
Right nigh the bothom pullid he
A leſe all grene, and yave me that,
The whiche full nigh the bothom ſat:
I madin of that leſe full queint,
And whan I felt I was aqueinte

Digitized by Google

With Bialacoil, and ſo prive,
I wende all my will had ybe,
Than wext I hardie for to tell
To Bialacoil how me befell
Of Love that toke and woundid me,
And ſayid, Sir, ſo mote I the,
I maie no joie have in no wiſe
Upon no ſide, but it ariſe
For ſithè (if I ſhall not faine)
In herte I have had ſo grete paine,
So grete anoie, and ſoche affraie,
That I ne wotte what I ſhall ſaie;
I drede your wrothè to deſerve;
Levir me were that knivis kerve
My bodie ſhould in pecis ſmall
Than in any wiſe it ſhould fall
That ye wrothid ſhould ben with me.
Saie boldily thy will, (quod he)
I n'ill be wrothe, if that I maie,
For nought that thou ſhalt to me ſaie.

Than ſaied I, Sir, not you diſpleſe
To knowin of my grete uneſe,
In whiche only Love hath me brought,
For painis grete, diſeſe, and thought,
Fro daie to daie it doeth me drie;
Suppoſith not, Sir, that I lie:

Digitized by Google

In me five woundis did he make,
The fore of whiche ſhall nevir ſlake
But ye the bothom graunte me
Whiche is moſt paſſaunt of beaute,
My life, my deth, and my martyre,
And treſour that I moſte deſire.
Than Bialacoil, affrayid all,
Sayid, Sir, it maie not befall
That ye deſire; it maie not riſe;
What! would ye ſhende me in this wiſe?
A mokill folè than I were
If I ſuffrid you' awaie to bere
The freſhe bothom ſo faire of ſight,
For it were neithir ſkill ne right
Of the roſir ye broke the rinde,
Or take the Roſe aforne his kinde:
Ye are not curteis to aſke it;
Let it ſtill on the roſir ſit;
Let it growe till it' amendid be,
And perfitly come to beaute;
I n'olde not that it pullid were
Fro the roſir that doth it bere,
To me it is ſo leſe and dere.
With that anon ſtert out Daungere
Out of the place where he was hidde;
His malice in his chere was kidde:
Full grete he was, and blacke of hewe,
Sturdie and hidous, who ſo' him knewe;

Digitized by Google

Like ſharpe urchons his heere was growe,
His eyes red-ſparcling as fire glowe;
His noſe frouncid full kirkid ſtode;
He come criande as he were wode,
And ſaied, Bialacoil, tel me why
Thou bringiſt hidir ſo boldely
Him that ſo nigh to the roſere?
Thou worchiſt in a wrong manere;
He thinkith to diſhonour the;
Thou art well worthy to' have malgre
To let him of the roſere witte:
Who ſervith Fellone is ill quitte.
Thou wouldiſt have doen grete bounte,
And he with ſhame would quitè the.
Flie hens, felowe; I rede the go;
It wantith lite he wol the ſlo,
For Bialacoil ne knewe the nought
Whan the to ſerve he ſet his thought,
For thou wolt ſhame him if thou might.
Bothe again reſon and 'gainſt right:
I woll no more in the affie
That comeſt ſo ſlightly for t' eſpie,
For it provith wondirly wele
Thy ſleight and treſon every dele.
I durſt no more make there abode
For the chorlè, he was ſo wode:
So gan he threttin and manace,
And through the haie he did me chace,

Digitized by Google

For fere of him I trembled and quoke,
So chorliſhely his hedde he ſhoke,
And ſaied, If eft he might me take
I ſhould nat from his hondis ſcape.
Than Bialacoil is fled and mate,
And I all ſole diſconſolate
Was left alone in pain and thought;
Fro ſhame to deth I was nigh brought:
Than thought I on my high folie,
How that my bodie utterlie
Was yeve to pain and to martire,
And therto had I ſo grete ire,
That I ne durſt the hayis paſſe;
There was no hope, there was no grace:
I trowe nevir man wiſte of pain
But he were laced in Lov'is chain,
Ne no man wiſt, (and ſoth it is)
But if he love, what angir is.
Love holdeth his heſte to me right wele;
Whan pain (he ſayid) I ſhould fele
No herte maie thinke no tongè ſain
A quartir of my wo and pain;
I might not with the angir laſt;
Mine herte in poinct was for to braſt
Whan I thought on the Roſe, that ſo
Was thorough Daungir caſt me fro.
A long while ſtode I in that ſtate,
Till that me ſawe ſo madde and mate

Digitized by Google

The ladie of the highè ward,
Whiche from her toure loked thidirward.
Reſon men clepin that lady,
Whiche from her toure delivirly,
Came doune to me withoutin mort;
But ſhe was neither yong ne hore,
Ne high ne lowe, ne fatte ne lene,
But beſt, as it were in a mene:
Her eyin two were clere and light
As a candill that brennith bright;
And on her hedde ſhe had a croune;
Her ſemid well an high perſoune,
For round environ her crounet
Was full of riche ſtonis afret;
Her godely ſemblaunt by deviſe
I trowe was made in Paradiſe,
For Nature had nevir ſoche grace
To forge a worke of ſoche compace;
For certain, but if the' lettir lie,
Grete God himſelf, that is ſo hie,
Formid her aftir his image,
And yafe her ſithe ſoche avauntage
That ſhe hath might and ſeignorie
To kepè men from all folie:
Who ſo woll trowè wele her lore
Ne maie offendin nevirmore.
And while I ſtode thus derke and pale
Reſon began to me her tale:

Digitized by Google

She ſaied, Al haile, my ſwetè frende!
Folie and childhod woll the ſhende,
Whiche the have put in grete afraie;
Thou haſt bought dere the time of Maie,
That made thine herte merie to be;
In evill time thou wenteſt to ſe
The gardin whereof Idilneſſe
Ybare the keie and was maiſtreſſe,
Whan that thou yediſt in the daunce
With her, and haddin acquaintaunce;
Her acquaintaunce is perillous,
Firſt ſoft, and aftir full noious;
She hath the traſhid without wene;
The god of Love had the nat ſene,
Ne had Idilneſſe the conveide
Within the verge where Mirthe him pleide;
If Folie have ſurprifid the
Doe ſo that it recovered be,
And be well ware to take no more
Counſaile that grevith aftir ſore:
He' is wiſe that woll himſelf chaſtiſe.
Though a yong man in any wiſe
Treſpaſſe emong and doe folie,
Let him nat dwelle, but haſtilie
Let him amende what ſo be mis;
And eke I counſaile the i-wis
The god of Love wholly foryete,
That hath the in ſoche pain yſete,

Digitized by Google

And the in herte tourmentid ſo;
I can not ſene how thou maieſt go
Othir waies the to gariſoun,
For Daungere, that is ſo feloun,
Fellie purpoſeth the to werreie,
Whiche is full cruill, ſothe to ſeie.

And yet of Daungere cometh no blame;
In reward of my doughtir Shame,
Whiche hath the roſis in her warde,
As ſhe that maie be no muſarde,
And Wickid Tong is with theſe two,
That ſuffrith no man thidir go,
For er a thing be doe he ſhall,
Where that he comith ovir all,
In fourtie placis, if' it be ſought,
Saie thing that nere was don ne wrought,
So moche traiſon is in his male,
Of falſeneſſe for to faine a tale.
Thou deleſt with angrie folke i-wis,
Wherefore to the the bettir is
From theſe folkis awaie to fare,
For thei woll make the live in care;
This is the ill that Love thei call,
Wherein there is but folie all,
For love is folie every dell;
Who loveth in no wiſe maie doe well,

Digitized by Google

Ne ſet his thought on no gode werke;
His ſchole he leſeth if he be clerke,
Or othir craft if that he he
He ſhall not thrive therein, for he
In love ſhal have more paſſioun
Than monke, or hermite, or chanoun.
This pain is herd out of meſure;
The joie maie no while endure;
And eke in the poſſeſſion
Is mochil tribulacion;
The joie it is ſo ſhort laſting,
And but in hape is the getting;
I ſe there many in travaile
That at the laſt ſhall fouly faile;
I was nothing thy counſailer,
Whan thou were made the homager
Of god of Love ſo haſtily,
Where was no wiſedome but folie;
Thine harte was jolie but not ſage
Whan thou were brought in ſoche a rage
To yelde the up ſo redily
To Love of his grete maiſtiry.

I rede the Love awaie to drive,
That maketh the reche not of thy live;
The folie more fro daie to daie
Shall growe but thou it put awaie;

Take with thy tethe the bridill faſte
To daunt thy herte, and eke the caſte,
If that thou maieſt, to get defence
For to redreſſe thy firſt offence:
Who ſo his herte alwaie woll leve
Shall finde emong that ſhall him greve.
Whan I her herd thus me chaſtiſe
I anſwerde in full angrie wiſe,
I prayid her ceſſe of her ſpeche
Eithir to chaſtiſe me or teche,
To bidde me my thought refrein,
Whiche Love hath caught in his demein:
What wenin ye Love woll conſent
(That me aſſayith with bowe bent)
To drawe mine herte out of his honde,
Whiche is ſo quickly in his bonde?
That ye counſaile maie nevir be,
For whan he firſt areſtid me
He toke mine herte ſo ſore him till
That it is nothing at my will;
He taught it ſo him for to'obeie
That he it ſparrid with a keie.
I praie you let me be all ſtill,
For ye maie well, if that ye will,
Your wordis waſte in idilneſſe,
For uttirly, withoutin geſſe,
All that ye ſaine is but in vain;
Me were levir die in the pain

Than Love to meward ſhould arette,
Falſhede or treſon on me ſette:
I woll me gettin pris or blame,
And love true for to ſave my name:
Who me chaſtiſith I him hate.
With that worde Reſon went her gate,
Whan ſhe ſawe for no ſermoning
She might me fro my folie bring:
Than diſmayid I left all fole,
For-werie, for-wandred, as a fole,
For I ne knewe no chevisaunce:
Than fell into my remembraunce
How Love ybadde me to purveie
A felawe to whom I might ſeie
My counſaile and my privite,
For that ſhould moche availin me.
With that bethought I me that I
Yhad a felaw faſtè by
True and ſikir, curteis and hende,
And he called was by name a Frende;
A truer felawe was no where none.
In haſt to him I went anone,
And to him all my wo I told,
Fro him right nought I would withold,
I tolde him all withoutin were,
And made my compleint on Daungere,
How for to ſeie he was hidous,
And to meward contrarious,

Digitized by Google

The whichè through his cruilte
Was in poinct to have meimid me,
With Bialacoil whan he me ſeie
Within the gardin walke and pleie
Fro me he made him for to go,
And I be left alone in wo;
I durſt no lengir with him ſpeke,
For Daungir ſaied he would be wreke
Whan that he ſawe how that I went
The freſhè bothom for to hent,
If I werè hardie to come nere
Bitwene the haie and the roſere.
This frende, whan hè wiſt of my thought,
He diſcomfortid me right nought,
But ſaied, Felawe, be nat ſo madde,
Ne ſo abaſhid nor beſtadde;
My ſelfe I knowe full well Daungere,
And how that he is fiers of chere,
At primè temps, Love to manace;
Full oft I have bèn in his caſe;
A felon firſt though that he be
Aftir thou ſhalt him ſouple ſe:
Of long paſſid I knewe him wele;
Ungodelie firſt though men him ſele
He woll meke aſtre' in his bering
Ben for ſervice and obeiſing:
I ſhall the tell what thou ſhalt doe;
Mekely I rede thou go him to,

Digitized by Google

Of herte praie him ſpecially
Of thy treſpace to have mercie,
And hotin him well here to pleſe,
That thou ſhalt ner more him diſpleſe:
Who can beſt ſerve of flatiry
Shall pleſe Daungir moſt uttirly.
My frende hath ſaied to me ſo wele
That he me eſid hath ſomedele,
And eke allegged of my tourment,
For through him had I hardiment
Again to Daungir for to go,
To preve if I might make him ſo.

To Daungir cam I all aſhamed,
The whiche aforne me had yblamed,
Deſiring for t'apeſe my wo,
But ovir hedge durſt I nat go,
For he forbode me the paſſage:
I founde him cruill in his rage,
And in his honde a grete bourdoun:
To him I knelid lowe adoun,
Full meke of port and ſimple' of chere,
And ſaied, Sir, I am comin here
Onely to aſk of you mercie;
It grevith me full gretily
That evir I have wrathid you,
But for to' amende I am come now,

Digitized by Google

With all my might bothe loude and ſtill
To doin right at your owne will,
For Love madin me for to do
That I have treſpaſſed hidirto,
Fro whome I ne maie drawe mine herte,
Yet ſhall I nere for joie ne ſmerte
(What ſo befall me, gode or ill)
Offendin more again your will;
Levir I have endure diſeſe
Than doe that whiche ſhould you diſpleſe.

I you require and praie that ye
Of me have mercie and pite,
To ſtint your ire that grevith ſo,
That I woll ſwere for evirmo
To be redreſſed at your liking
If I treſpace in any thing,
Save that (I praie the) graunte me
A thing that maie nat warnid be,
That I maie love all onily,
None othir thing of you aſke I;
I ſhall doin all wele i-wis,
If of your grace you graunt me this,
And that ye maie nat lettin me,
For well wote ye that love is fre,
And I ſhall loven ſoche that I will,
Who evir like it well or ill,

Digitized by Google

And yet ne would I for all Fraunce
Doe thing to doe you diſpleſaunce.
Than Daungir fill in his entent
For to foryeve his male talent,
But all his wrathe yet at the laſt
He hath releſed, I praied ſo faſt.
Shortly, (he ſayid) thy requeſt
Is nat to mokill diſhoneſt,
Ne I woll nat wernin it the,
For yet nothing engrevith me;
For though thou love thus evirmore
To me is neithir ſofte ne ſore:
Love where the liſt, what rechith me?
So ferre thou fro my roſis be;
Truſt not on me for none aſſaie
In any time to paſſe the haie.
Thus hath he grauntid my praiere:
Than went I forthe withoutin were
Unto my frende, and told him all
Whiche was right joifull of my tale.
(He ſaied) Now goeth well thine affaire,
He ſhall to the be debonaire;
Though he aforne was diſpitous
He ſhall hereaftir be gracious;
If he were touched on ſome gode vein
He ſhould yet rewin on thy pein:
Suffir, I rede, and no boſte make
Till thou at gode mes maieſt him take.

Digitized by Google

By ſuffraunce and by wordis ſoft
A man maie ovircomin oft
Him that aforne he had in drede,
In bokis ſothly as I rede.
Thus hath my frende with grete comfort
Avauncid me with high diſport,
Whiche would me gode as moche as I;
And than anon full ſodainly
I toke my leve, and ſtreight I went
Unto the haie, for grete talent
I had to ſene the freſhe bothom
Wherein laie my ſalvacion,
And Daungir toke kepe if that I
Kepe him covinaunt truily:
So ſore I drede his manaſing
I durſt not brekin his bidding,
For leſt that I were of him ſhent
I brake not his commaundiment,
For to purchaſin his gode will
It was for to comin there till;
His mercie was to ſerre behinde
Ykept, for I ne might it finde:
I complainid and ſighid ſore,
And languiſhid evir the more,
For I ne durſt nat ovir go
Unto the Roſe I lovid ſo,
Throughout my deming uttirly
That he had knowlege certainly:

Digitized by Google

Than Love me ladde in ſochè wiſe
That in me there was no feintiſe
Ne falſhedde, ne no trecherie,
And yet he full of villanie,
And of diſdaine and cruiltè,
On me ne would have no pitè
His cruill will for to refrain,
Tho I wept aie and me complain.

And while I was in this turment
Were come of grace, by God yſent,
Dame Fraunchiſe, and with her Pite,
Fulfilde the bothom of bounte:
Thei go to Daungir anon right
To ferthir me with all ther might,
And helpe me in worde and in dede,
For well thei ſawe that it was nede.
Firſt of her gracè Dame Fraunchiſe
Ytakin hath of this empriſe;
She ſaied, Daungir, grete wrong ye doe
To worche this man ſo mochil woe,
Or pinin him ſo angirlie,
It is to you grete villanie;
I can not ſe ne why ne how
That he hath treſpaſſed again you,
Save that he loveth, wherefore ye ſhold
The more in charite' of him hold:
The force of Love maketh him doe this;
Who would him blame he did amis:

Digitized by Google

He levith more than he maie doe;
His pain is harde ye maie se, lo!
And Love in no wise would consent
That he have powir to repent,
For though that quicke ye would him slo
Fro Love his herte ne maie nat go.
Now, swetè Sir, it is your ese
Him for to angir or disese.
Alas! what maie it you avaunce
To doen to him so grete grevaunce?
What worship is' it again him take,
Or on your man a werrè make,
Sithe he so lowlie every wise
Is redy as ye luste devise?
If Love have caught him in his lace,
You for t' obaie in every cace,
And ben your subject at your will,
Should ye therfore willin him ill?
Ye should him sparin more all out
Than him that is bothe proude and stout:
Curtisie would that ye succoure
Them that ben meke undir your cure:
His herte is hard that woll not meke
Whan men of mekenesse him beseke.

This is certain, sayid Pite,
We se oft that humilite

Digitized by Google

Bothe ire and alſo felonie
Venquiſh'eth, and alſo' melancolie,
To ſtondin forthe in ſoche dureſſe
This cruilte and wickidneſſe;
Wherefore I praie you, Sir Daungere,
For to maintein no lengir here
Soche cruiſl wetre again your man,
As wholly your's as er he can,
Nor that ye worchin no more wo
On this caitife languiſhing ſo,
Whiche woll no more to you treſpace,
But put him wholly in your grace:
And his offence ne was but lite;
The god of Love it was to wite
That he your thrall ſo gretely is:
If ye him harme ye doen amis,
For he hath had full hard penaunce
Sith that ye reft him th' aquaintaunce
Of Bialacoil, his moſtè joie,
Whiche all his painis might acoie:
He was before anoyid ſore,
But than ye doublid him well more,
For he of bliſſe hath ben full bare
Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare:
Love hath to him done grete diſtreſſe,
He hath no nede of more dureſſe:
Voidith from him your ire I rede;
Ye maie not winnin in this dede:

Digitized by Google

Maketh Bialacoil repaire again
And havith pite on his pain,
For Fraunchiſe woll, and I Pite,
That merciſull to him ye be;
And ſithe that ſhe and I accorde
Have upon him miſericorde,
For I you praie, and eke moneſte,
Nought to refuſin our requeſte,
For he is hard and fell of thought,
That for us two woll doe right nought.
Daungir ne might no more endure,
He mekid him unto mèſure.
I woll in no wiſe, ſaieth Daungere,
Denie that ye have aſkid here,
It were to grete uncurtiſie;
I woll ye have the compànie
Of Bialacoil, as ye deviſe;
I woll him lettin in no wiſe.
To Bialacoil than went in hie
Fraunchiſe, and ſaied full curtiſlie,
Ye have to long yben deignous
Unto this lovir and daunge'rous,
Fro him to withdrawe your preſence,
Whiche hath doe to him grete offence,
That ye not would upon him ſe,
Wherfore a ſorowfull man is he:
Shape ye to paie him and to pleſe,
Of my love if ye woll have eſe:

Digitized by Google

Fulfill his will: ſith that ye knowe
Daungir is dauntid and brought lowe
Through helpe of me and of Pite
You dare no more aferde to be.
I ſhall doin right as ye will,
Saieth Bialacoil, for it is ſkill,
Sith Daungir woll that it ſo be;
Than Fraunchiſe hath him ſent to me.

Bialacoil at the beginning
Saluid me in his comming;
No ſtraungèneſſe was in him ſene
No more than he ne' had wrathid ben;
As faire ſemblaunt than ſhewed he me,
And godely, as aforne did he,
And by the honde withoutin doubt
Within the haie right all about
He lad me with a right gode chere,
All environ on the vergere
That Daungere had me chaſid fro.
Now have I leve ovre' all to go,
Now am I raiſed at my deviſe
Fro hell up unto paradiſe.
Thus Bialacoil of gentilneſſe
With all his pain and buſineſſe
Hath ſhewid me onely of grace
The eſtirs of the ſotè place.

Digitized by Google

I ſawe the Roſe, whan I was nigh,
Was gretir woxin and more high,
Freſhe and roddy, and faire of hewe,
Of colour evir iliche newe:
And whan I had it longè ſene
I ſawe that through the levis grene
The Roſè ſpred to ſpanniſhing,
To ſene it was a godely thing,
But it ne was ſo ſprede on brede
That men within might knowe the ſede,
For it covert ywas and cloſe
Bothe with the leves and with the Roſe;
The ſtalke was even' and grene upright,
It was thereon a godely ſight,
And well the bettir without wene
For that the ſede was not yſene:
Full faire it ſprad, the god of Bleſſe,
For ſoche an othir as I geſſe
Aforne ne was, ne more vermaile;
I was abawid for marveile,
For er the fairir that it was
The more I' am boundin in Love's laas.
Long I abode there, ſothe to ſaie,
Till Bialacoil I gan to praie,
Whan that I ſawe him in no wiſe
To me to warnin his ſervice,
That he to me would graunt a thing
Whiche to remembre' is well ſitting,

This is to ſaine, that of his grace
He would me yeve leiſar and ſpace,
To me that was ſo deſirous
To have a kiſſing precious
Of the ſo godely freſhè Roſe
That ſo ſwetely ſmelleth in my noſe,
For if it you diſpleſid nought
I woll gladly, as I have ſought,
Havin a kiſſe thereof frely
Of your yeſtè, for certainly
I woll none have but by your leve,
So lothe me were you for to greve.

He ſayid, Frende, ſo God me ſpede,
Of Chaſtite I have ſoche drede,
Thou ſhouldeſt not warnid be for me,
But I dare not for Chaſtite;
Again her dare I not miſdoe,
For alwaie biddith ſhe me ſo
To yeve no lovir leve to kiſſe,
For who thereto may winnen, i-wiſſe
He of the ſurplus of the praie
May live in hope to get ſome daie;
For who ſo kiſſing maie attain
Of lov'is pain hath (ſoth to ſain)
The beſt and the moſte avmaunt,
And erneſt of the remnaunt.

Of his anſwere I ſighid ſore,
I durſt aſſaie him tho no more,
I had ſuche drede to greve him aie:
A man ſhould not to muche aſſaie
To chaſe his frende out of meſure,
Nor put his life in avinture;
For no man at the firſte ſtroke
Ne may not fel adoune an oke,
Nor of the reiſins have the wine
Till grapes be ripe and wel a-fine,
Be ſore empreſſed, I you enſure,
And drawin out of the preſſure:
But I, forpeinid wondir ſtrong,
Thoughtè that I abode right long
Aſtir the kiſſe in paine and wo,
Sith I to kiſſe deſirid ſo;
Till that rewing on my diſtreſſe
There comin Venus the goddeſſe,
(Whiche aie werryith Chaſtite)
Came of her grace to ſocour me,
Whoſe might is knowin ferre and wide,
For ſhe is mothir of Cupide,
The god of Love, as blinde as ſtone,
That helpith lovirs many one.
This lady brought in her right honde
Of brenning fire a blaſing bronde,

Digitized by Google

Whereof the flame and hotè fire
Hath many' a lady in desire
Of love ybrought, and sore yhette,
And in her service her herte sette.
This lady was of gode entaile,
Right wondirful of apparaile;
By her atire so bright and shene
Men might percevin well and sene
She was not of religioun;
Nor I n'il makin mencioun
Nor of her robe nor of tresour,
Of broche ne of her riche attour,
Ne of her girdle' about her side,
For that I n'il not long abide;
But knowith well that certainly
She was arrayid richily;
Devoide of pride certaine she was;
To Bialacoil she went a paas,
And to him shortely in a clause
She sayid, Sir, what is the cause
Ye ben of porte so daungirous
Unto this lovir and dainous,
To graunt him nothing but a kisse?
To warne it him ye done amisse,
Sithe well ye wotin how that he
Is Love's servaunt, as ye may se,
And hath beaute, wher through he is
Worthy of love to have the blis.

Digitized by Google

How he' is ſemely beholde and ſe,
How he is faire, how he is fre,
How he is ſote and debonaire,
Of agè yonge, luſty and faire:
There is no lady ſo hauteine,
Ducheſſe, counteſſe, ne chaſtèlaine,
That I n'olde holde her ungodely
For to refuſe him uttirly.
His brethe is alſo gode and ſwete,
And his lippes roddy; are thei mete
Only to plaine and not to kiſſe?
Graunt him a kiſſe of gentilneſſe.
His teth arne alſo white and clene;
Me thinkith wrong withoutin wene
If ye now warne him, truſtith me,
To grauntè that a kiſſe have he;
The laſſe ye helpe him that ye haſte,
And the more timè ſhul ye waſte.
Whan the flame of the very bronde
That Venus brought in her right honde
Had Bialacoil with his hete ſmete
Anone he bade me without lete,
And grauntid me the Roſe to kiſſe,
Than of my paine I ganne to liſſe,
And to the Roſe anon went I,
And kiſſid it ful faithfully.
Nede no man aſke if I was blith
Whan the ſavour ſo ſofte and lith

Digitized by Google

Stroke to mine hert withoutin more,
And me alleggid of my sore,
So was I sul of joye and blisse;
It is saire suche a floure to kisse;
It was so sote and savirous
I might not be so anguishous
That I mote glad and joly be;
Whan that I do remembre me
Yet evre' among (sothly to saine)
I suffre noie and mochil paine.

The se may nevir be so still
But with a litill winde at will
May ovirwhelme and tourne also
As it were wode in wawis go;
Attir the calme the trouble sone
Mote solow, and chaunge as the mone.
Right so fareth Love, that selde in one
Holdeth his ancre, for right anone
Whan thei in ese wene best to live
They ben with tempest all fordrive.
Who servith Love can tel of wo
The stoundmele joye mote ovirgo;
Now he hurtith and now he cureth,
For selde in o pointe Love endureth.
Now is it right me to procede
How Shame gan medle and take hede,

Digitized by Google

Through whom fel angirs I have hade,
And how the ſtrongè wall was made,
And the caſtill of brede and length,
That god of Love wan with his ſtrength:
Al this in Romance will I ſet,
And for no thing ne will I let,
So that it liking to her be
That is the floure of all beaute,
For ſhe may beſt my labour quite
That I for her love ſhal endite.
Wickid Tonge, whiche that the covine
Of every lovir can devine
Worſte, and aie addith more ſomdele,
(For wickid tonge ſaith nevir wele)
To mewarde bare he right gret hate,
Eſpying me erly and late,
Til he hath ſene the gretè chere
Of Bialacoil and me ifere:
He ne might not his tonge withſtonde
Worſe to reportin than he fonde,
He was ſo ful of curſid rage:
It ſat him wele of his linage,
For him an Iriſhe woman bare:
His tonge was filid ſharpe and ſquare,
And right poignaunt, and right kerving,
And wondir bittir in ſpeking;
For whan that he me gan eſpie
He ſwore (affirming ſikirly)

Digitized by Google

Bitwene Bialacoil and me
Was ill aquaintaunce and prive:
He ſpake therof ſo folilie
That he awakid Jelouſie,
Whiche all afraied in his riſing,
Whan that he herdè the jangling,
He ran anon as he were wode
To Bialacoil there that he ſtode,
Whichè had levir in this caas
Have ben at Reines or Amias;
For fote-hote in his felonie
To him thus ſaidè Jelouſie;
" Why haſt thou ben ſo negligent
" To kepin, whan I was abſent,
" This vergir here lefte in thy warde?
" To me thou haddiſt no regarde
" To truſt (to thy confuſion)
" Him thus, to whom ſuſpection
" I have right grete, for it is nede,
" It is well ſhewid by the dede:
" Grete faute in the now have I founde;
" By God anon thou ſhalt be bounde,
" And faſtè lockin in a toure,
" Withoutin refuite or ſocoure.

" For Shame to long hath be the fro;
" Ovir ſonè ſhe was ago;

Digitized by Google

" Whan thou haſt loſt both drede and fere
" It ſemid well ſhe was not here,
" For ſhe was beſy in no wiſe
" To kepin the and to chaſtice,
" And for to helpin Chaſtite
" To kepe the roſir, as thinketh me,
" For than this boie knave ſo boldly
" Ne ſhouldè nat have be hardy,
" Ne in this vergir had ſuche game,
" Which now me tournith to grete ſhame."

Bialacoil n'is what to ſaie,
Ful faine he would have fled awaie,
For fere have hyid, n'ere that he
All ſodainly toke him with me;
And whan I ſawe that he had ſo
This Jelouſie takin us two
I was aſtoned, and knewe no rede,
But fledde away for very drede.
Than Shame came forth ful ſimpilly;
She wende have treſpaced ful gretely,
Humble' of her porte, and made it ſimple,
Wering a vaile in ſtede of wimple,
As nonnis done in ther abbey:
Bicauſe her hert was in affray
She gan to ſpeke within a throwe
To Jelouſie right wondir lowe.

Digitized by Google

First of his grace she him besought,
And sayid, Sir, ne levith nought
Wickid Tongè, that false espie,
Which is so glad to faine and lie;
He hath you made through flatèring
On Bialacoil a false lesing;
His falsnesse is not nowe a nowe,
It is to longe that he him knewe;
This ne is not the firstè daie,
For Wickid Tonge hath custome aie
The yongè folkis to bewrie,
And false lesingis on 'hem lie.
Yet nere-theleſſe I se among
That the soignè it is so long
Of Bialacoil, hertis to lure
In Lov'is service for to' endure,
Ydrawing suchè folke him to
That he hath nothing with to do,
But in sothnesse I trowè nought
That Bialacoil had er in thought
To do trespace or vilanie,
But for his mothir Curtisie
Hath taught him evir for to be
Gode of aqueintaunce and prive,
For he lovith none hevinesse,
But mirth and play, and all gladnesse;
He hatith eke allè trechours,
And soleine folke and envious,

Digitized by Google

For ye wele wetin how that he
Wol evir glad and joyful be
Honeſtly with folkè to pley:
I have be negligent in fey
To chaſtiſe him, therfore now I
Of herte ycrie you here mercy,
That I have ben ſo rechiles
To tamin him withoutin lees;
Of my foly I me repent;
Now wol I whole ſet mine entent
To kepin bothè low and ſtill
Bialacoil to do your will.
O Shame! o Shame! ſaide Jelouſe,
To be bitraſhed grete drede have I;
Lecherie hath ychombe ſo hie,
That almoſt blerid is mine eie:
No wondir is if drede have I,
Ovir al reignith Lechery,
Whoſe might ygrowith night and dey
Both in cloiſtre and in abbey;
Chaſtite' is werried ovir all,
Therfore I woll with ſikir wall
Cloſe both the roſis and roſere;
I have to long in this manere
Lefte 'hem uncloſid wilfully,
Wherfore I am right inwardly
Sorowfull, and repentè me;
But now thei ſhall no longir be

Digitized by Google

Uncloſid; and yet I drede ſore
I ſhall repentè ferthirmore,
For the game goith all amis;
Counſaile I muſtè newe i-wis:
I have to long ytruſtid the,
But now it ſhal no lengir be,
For he may beſt in every coſte
Decevin that men truſtin moſte:
I ſe well that I am nigh ſhent
But if I ſet my full entent
Some remedie for to purveie,
Wherfore cloſin I ſhall the wey
From them that woll the Roſe eſpie,
And come to waite me vilonie;
For now in gode faith and in trouth
I wol not lettin for no ſlouth,
To live the more in ſikirneſſe,
Do make anon a fortireſſe,
Than cloſe the roſis of gode ſavour;
In middis ſhal I make a tour
To put Bialacoil in priſon,
For evir I drede me of treſon:
I trow I ſhal him kepè ſo
That he ſhal have no might to go
About to makin companie
To them that thinke of vilanie,
Nè to no ſuche as hath ben here
Aforne, and founde in him gode chere,

Digitized by Google

Whiche han aſſailid him to ſhende,
And with ther trowandiſe to blende:
A folè is eith to begile;
But may I live a litil while
He ſhal forthinke his faire ſemblaunt.
And with that worde came Drede Avaunt,
Whiche was abaſhed, and in grete fere
Whan he wiſt Jelouſie was there;
He was for drede in ſuche affray
That not a wordè durſte he ſay,
But quaking ſtode ful ſtil alone,
(Til Jelouſie his way was gone)
Save Shamè, that him not forſoke;
Both Drede and ſhe ful forè quoke,
That at the laſtè Drede abraide,
And to his coſin Shamè ſaide:
Shamè, (he ſaid) in ſothfaſtneſſe
To me it is gret hevineſſe
That the noiſe is ſo ferre ygo,
And eke the ſclaundir, of us two,
But ſithin that it is befall
We maie it not againè call
Whan onis ſprongin is a fame;
For many' a yere withoutin blame
We have ben, and many a day,
For many' an Aprill, many' a May,
We han ypaſſid nothing ſhamed,
Til Jelouſie hath us yblamed

Digitized by Google

Of miſtruſt and ſuſpection
Cauſèleſſe, without encheſon:
Go we to Daungir haſtily,
And let us ſhewe him opinly
That he hath not aright ywrought
Whan that he ſettè not his thought
To kepin bettir the purpriſe:
In his doing he is not wiſe;
He hath to us do gretè wrong,
That hath ſuffirid now ſo long
Bialacoil to have his will
Allè his luſtis to fulfill:
He muſt amende it uttirly,
Or els ſhal he vilainouſly
Exilid be out of this londe,
For he the werre maie not withſtonde
Of Jelouſie, nor bere the grefe,
Sithe Bialacoil is at miſchefe.

To Daungir Shame and Drede anon
The rightè way ben both ygon;
The chorle thei foundin 'hem aforne
Ligging undir an hawethorne;
Undir his hed no pilowe was,
But in the ſtede a truſſe of gras;
He ſlombrid, and a knappe he toke,
Til Shamè pitouſly him ſhoke,

And grete manace on him gan make.
Why ſlepiſt thou whan thou ſhould wake?
(Quod Shame) thou doeſt us vilanie;
Who truſtith the he doth folie
To kepè roſis or bothoms
Whan thei ben: faire in ther feſons:
Thou arte woxe to familiere
Wher thou ſhould be ſtraunge of chere,
Stoute of thy porte, redy to greve:
Thou doeſt gret folie for to leve
Bialacoil here inne to call
The yongir man to ſhenden us all:
Though that thou ſlepe we mowin here
Of Jelouſie grete noiſè here:
Art thou now late? riſe up an hie,
And ſtoppe ſone and delivirly
Allè the gappis of the hay;
Do no favour I do the pray:
It fallith nothing to thy name
To' make fayre ſemblaunt where thou mayſte blame.

If Bialacoil be ſwete and fre
Doggid and fel thou ſhouldiſt be,
Froward and outragious i-wis;
A chorle chaungith that curteis is;
This have I herde oft in faying,
That man ne maie for no daunting

Make a ſperhauke of a boſarde:
Al men wol hold the for muſarde
That debonaire have foundin the:
It ſitteth the nought curteis to be:
To do men pleſaunce or ſerviſe
In the it is recreaundiſe:
Let thy werkis ferrè and nere
Be like thy name, whiche is Daungere.
Than al abaſhid in ſhewing
Anon ſpake Drede, right thus ſaying,
And ſayid, Daungir, I drede me
That thou ne woltè bely be
To kepin that thou haſt to kepe:
Whan thou ſhouldeſt wake thou art a-ſlepe:
Thou ſhalt be grevid certainly
If the aſpyin Jelouſie,
Or if he findè the in blame;
He hath to day aſſailid Shame,
And chaſed away with grete manace
Bialacoil out of this place,
And ſwerith ſhortly that he ſhall
Encloſe him in a ſturdy wall;
And al is for thy wickidneſſe,
For that the failith ſtraungèneſſe;
Thine hert I trowe be faillid all;
Thou ſhalt repent in ſpeciall,
If Jelouſie the ſothè knewe,
Thou ſhalt forthinke and ſorè rewe.

Digitized by Google

With that the chorle his clubbe gan ſhake,
Frowning his eyin gan to make,
And hidous chere, as man in rage;
For yre he brent in his viſage:
Whan that he herde him blamid ſo
He ſaid, Out of my witte I go,
To be diſcomfite I' have grete wrong;
Certis I have now lived to long
Sithe I may not this cloſir kepe:
Al quicke I would be dolvin depe
Yf any man ſhal more repayre
To this gardin for foule or fayre;
Mine hert for ire goith a-fere
That I let any entre here:
I have do foly now I ſe,
But now it ſhal amendid be:
Who ſettith fote here any more
Truly he ſhall repent it ſore,
For no man more into this place
Of me to entre ſhall have grace;
Levir I had with ſwerdis twaine
Throughout mine hert in every vaine,
Percid to be with many' a wounde
Than ſlouthè ſhould in me be founde:
From hennisforth by night or day
I ſhall defende it if I may
Withoutin any excepcion
Of eche manir condicion,

Digitized by Google

And if I it any man graunte
There holdith me for recreaunte.

Than Daungir on his fete gan ſtonde
And hent a burdon in his honde;
Wrothe in his ire ne left he nought,
But through the vergir he hath ſought
If he might findin hole or trace
Where through that me mote forth by pace,
Or any gappe, he did it cloſe;
That no man might touchin a Roſe
Of the roſir allè about,
He ſhittith every man without.
Thus day by day Daungir is wers,
More wondirfull and more divers,
And fellir eke than evre' he was,
For him ful oft I ſinge alas!
For I ne may nought through his ire
Recovir that I moſte deſire:
Mine hert, alas! wol breſt a-two,
For Bialacoil I wrathid ſo;
For certainly in every membre
I quake whan that I me remembre
Of the bothom whiche that I wolde
Ful oft a day ſene and beholde;
And when I thinke upon the kiſſe,
And how much joie and how much bliſſe

I haddè through the ſavour ſwete,
For want of it I grone and grete:
Me thinketh I ſele yet in my noſe
The ſotè ſavour of the Roſe,
And now I wote that I mote go
So ferre the freſhè flouris fro,
To me ful welcome were the dethe,
Abſence therof (alas!) me ſlethe;
For whilom with this Roſe, alas!
I touchid noſe, and mouthe, and face,
But now the deth I muſt abide:
But Love conſent an othir tide
That onis I touche maie and kiſſe
I trow my paine ſhal nevir liſſe;
Theron is all my covetiſe,
Whiche brent my hert in many wiſe:
Now ſhal repaire againe ſighing,
Long watche on nightes, and no ſleping,
Thought in wiſhing, turment, and wo,
With many' a tourning to and fro,
That halfe my paine I cannot tell,
For I am fallin into hell
From paradiſe and welthe: the more
My turment grevith, more and more
Anoyith now the bittirneſſe
That I to forne have felte ſwetneſſe:
And Wickid Tonge throughe his falſhede
Ycauſith all my wo and drede;

On me he lieth a pitous charge,
Bicauſe his tongè was to large.
Now is it time ſhortly that I
Tel you ſomthing of Jelouſy,
That was in grete ſuſpeccion:
About him lefte he no maſon
That ſtone could laie, ne no querrour,
He hirid 'hem to make a tour;
And firſt the roſis for to kepe
About 'hem made he a diche depe,
Right wondir large, and alſo brode,
Upon the whichè alſo ſtode
Of ſquarid ſtone a ſturdy wall,
Whiche on a cragge was foundid all,
And right grete thickneſſe eke it bare;
About it was yfoûndid ſquarè
An hundrid fadome' on every ſide;
It was al liche both long and wide:
Leſt any time it were aſſailed
Ful wel about it was batailed,
And rounde environ eke were ſet
Ful many' a riche and faire tournet:
At every cornir of this wall
Was ſet a tour ful principall,
And evèriche had without fable
A portcoliſe defenſable,
To kepe of en'emies, and to greve
That there ther forcè would ypreve.

Digitized by Google

And eke amiddè this purprise
Was made a tour of grete maistrise,
A fairir saugh no man with sight,
Largè and wide, and of grete might:
Thei draddè nought nonè assaut
Of ginn or gonn, nor of skassaut:
The tempereure of the mortere
Was made of lycoure wondir dere,
Of quicklime persaunt and egre,
Which temprid was with vinegre.
The stone was harde of adamaunt
Wherof thei made the foundemaunt;
The tour was rounde made in compas;
In al this world no richir was,
Ne bettir ordained therewithall:
About the tour was made a wall,
So that betwixt that and the toure
Rosis were set of swete savoure,
With many rosis that thei bere:
And eke within the castil were
Springoldis, gonnes, bowes, and archers,
And eke about at the corners
Men seinin ovir the wall stonde
Gret engins, which ywere nere honde,
And in the kernils here and there
Of arblastirs grete plentie were;
Nonè armour mighte ther stroke withstonde,
It were foly to prese to honde:

Without the diche were lilis made
With wal batailid large and brade,
For men and horſe ſhould not attaine
To nigh the diche ovir the plaine.
Thus Jeloſie hath enviren
Yſette about his garniſon
With wallis rounde and dichè depe,
Onely the roſir for to kepe,
And Daungir bothe erly and late
The keyes kept of the uttir gate,
The whiche opened towarde the eſt,
And he had with him at the leſt
Thurty ſervauntes echone by name.
That othir gate was kept by Shame,
Whiche opinid, as it was couthe,
Towardis the parte of the ſouthe,
Sergeauntes aſſignid were her to
Full many, her will for to do:
Than Dredè had in her baillie
The keping of the conſtable'rie
Towarde the north I underſtonde,
That opened upon the leſte honde,
The whiche for nothing may be ſure
But if ſhe do her beſy cure
Erly on mor'we', and alſo late,
Strongly to ſhette and barre the gate,
Of every thing that ſhe may ſe
Drede is aferde where ſo ſhe be,

For with a puffe of litill winde
Drede is aſtonied in her minde,
Therfore for ſteling of the Roſe
I rede her nat the yate unclоſe:
A foul'is flight would make her flie,
And eke a ſhadowe, if ſhe it ſe.

Than Wickid Tonge, full of envy,
With ſoudiers of Normandy,
As he that cauſith all debate,
Was kepir of the fourthè gate,
And alſo to the tothir thre
He went ful oftè for to ſe.
Whan his lotte was to walke a night
His inſtrumentis would be dight
For to blowin and makin ſoune
Oftir than he hath encheſoune,
And walkin oft upon the wall,
Cornirs and wickittes ovir all
Ful narowe ſerchin and eſpie:
Though he nought ſonde yet would he lie
Diſcordaunt er fro armonie,
And diſſonid fro melodie;
Controve he would, and foulè faile,
With hornpipis of Cornèwaile;
In floitis made he diſcordaunce,
And in his muſike, with miſchaunce!

He wouldè ſeine with notis newe
That he ne fonde no woman trewe,
Ne that he ſawe nere in his life
Unto her huſbonde a trewe wife,
Ne none ſo ful of hŏneſte
That ſhe n'il laugh and mery be
Whan that ſhe hereth or may eſpie
A man ſpekin of lęcherie:
Evèriche of 'hem hath ſome vice;
One is diſhoneſt, t'other nice;
Yf one be ful of vilanię
An othir hath a lico'rous eie;
If one be ful of wantoneſſe
Anothir is a chidireſſe.
Thus Wickid Tonge, God yeve him ſhame!
Can put 'hem everichone in blame
Without deſert, and cauſileſſe;
He lieth though thei ben giltileſſe:
I have pity to ſene the ſorowe
That wakith bothe evin and morowe
To innocentes doth ſuche grevaunce,
I pray God yeve him evil chaunce!
That he evir ſo beſy is
Of any woman to' ſeine amis.
Eke Jelouſie may God confounde!
That hath makid a toure ſo rounde,
And made about a gariſon;
To ſette Bialacoil in priſon,

The whiche is ſhette there in the tour,
Fal long to holdè ther ſojour,
There for to livin in penaunce;
And for to do him more grevaunce,
Whiche hath ordainid Jelouſie,
An oldè vecke for to eſpie
The manir of his governaunce,
The whiche devil in hér infaunce
Had lernid all of Lov'is arte,
And of his pleyis toke her parte:
She was expert in his ſerviſe;
She knewe eche wrenche and every giſe
Of Love, and every ſecret wile;
It was right harde her to begile.
Of Bialacoil ſhe toke aie hede,
That er he liveth in wo and drede
He kepte him coye and eke prive,
Leſt that in him ſhe haddè ſe
Any lite foly countinaunce,
For ſhe knew all the oldè daunce.
And after this whan Jelouſie
Had Bialacoil in his baillie,
And ſhette him up that was ſo fre,
For ſure of him he would ybe,
He truſtith ſore in his caſtell,
The ſtrongè werkę him likith well;
He dradde nat that no glotons
Should ſtele his roſis or bothoms;

Digitized by Google

The rosis weren allirid all,
Defencid with the strongè wall:
Now Jelousie full well may be
Of drede devoide, in liberte;
Whether that he or slepe or wake
Of his rosis may none be take.

But I (alas!) now mournè shall
Bicause I was without the wall:
Ful mochil dole and mone I made;
Who so had wist what wo I had
I trowe he would have had pite;
Love all to dere had soldè me;
The gode that of his love had I
I went about it al queintly,
But nowe through dubling of my paine
I se he woll it sell again,
And me a newè bargain lere,
The whiche all out the more is dere
For the solace that I have lorne
Than I had it nevir aforne:
Certain I am full like in dede
To him that caste in yerth his sede,
And hath joie of the newe springing
Whan it grenith in the ginning,
And is so faire and freshe of floure,
Lustie to sene, sote of odoure,

Digitized by Google

But er he it in ſhevis ſhere
Maie fall wethir that ſhall it dere,
And makin it to fade and fall
The ſtalke, the greine, and flouris all,
That to the tiller is fordoen,
The hope he had conceved to ſone.
I drede certaine that ſo fare I,
For hope and travaile ſikirly
Ben me birafte all with a ſtorme:
The floure n'ill ſedin of my corne,
For Love hath ſo avauncid me,
Whan I began my privite
To Bialacoil all for to tell,
Whom I ne founde froward ne fell,
But toke agre all whole my plaie;
But Love is of ſo harde aſſaie,
That all at ones he revid me
Whan I wened beſt above to' have be.
It is of Love as of Fortune,
That chaungith oft, and n'ill contune,
Whiche whilom will on folkè ſmile,
And glombe on 'hem an othir while;
Now frende now foe thou ſhalt her fele,
For a twincling tourneth her whele.
She can writhin her hedde awaie;
This is the concourſe of her plaie,
She can areiſe that doith mourne,
And whirle adoune and ovirtourne

Who ſittith hieſt but as her luſt:
A fole is he that woll her truſt,
For it is I that am come doune
Through charge and revolucioun;
Sithe Bialacoil mote fro me twin,
Shette in her priſon yonde within,
His abſence at mine herte I fele,
For all my joie and all mine hele
Ywas in him and in the Roſe,
That but you woll, whiche him doeth cloſe,
Opin, that ſo I maie him ſe,
Love woll not that I curid be
Of the painis that I endure,
Nor of my cruill avinture.

Ah, Bialacoil, mine own dere!
Though thou be now a priſonere
Kepith at leſt thine herte to me;
Suffir not that it dauntid be,
Ne let not Jelouſie' in his rage
Puttin thine herte in no ſervage:
Although he chaſtice the without,
And make thy bodie to him lout,
Have herte as harde as diamaunt,
Stedfaſt and ſtout, and naught pliaunt:
In priſon though thy bodie be
At largè kepe thine herte ſre:

A trewè hert ne will not plie
For no manace that it maie drie:
If Jelouſie doith the pain
Quite him his wilè thus again,
To vengè the at leſt in thought,
If othir waie thou mayiſt nought,
And in this wiſe full ſubtillie
Worchin and winne the maiſtiry.
But yet I am in grete affraie
Leſt thou ſholdeſt nat doe as I ſaie;
I drede thou canſt me grete maugre
That thou enpriſoned art for me,
But yet right nought for my treſpas,
For through me nere diſcovered was
Yet thing that ought to be ſecre:
Well more annoiè is in me
Than is in the of this miſchaunce,
For I endure more hard penaunce
Than any man can ſaine or thinke,
That for the ſorowe' almoſte I ſinke:
Whan I remembir me' of my wo
Full nigh out of my witte I go.
Inward mine herte I fele blede,
For comfortleſſe the deth I drede:
Owe I nat well to have diſtreſſe
Whan falſè through ther wickidneſſe,
And traitours, that arne envious,
To noien me be ſo çoragious?

Digitized by Google

Ah, Bialacoil! full well I ſe
That thei 'hem ſhape to deceve the,
To make the buxum to ther lawe,
And with ther cordè the to drawe
Where ſo 'hem luſt, right at ther will;
I drede thei have the brought there till:
Withoutin comfort thought me ſlaeth;
This game would bring me to my deth,
For if that I your gode will leſe
I mote be dedde, I maie not cheſe,
And if that thou foryetè me
Mine herte ſhall nere in liking be,
Nor elliſwhere findin ſolace:
If I be put out of your grace,
As it ſhall nevir ben I hope,
Than ſhuldin I fall in wanhope.
Alas, in wanhope! naie, parde,
For I woll nere diſpeirid be:
If Hope me faile than alle am I
Ungracious and unworthy:
In Hope I woll comfortid be,
For Love, whan he betaught her me,
Sayid that Hope where ſo I go
Should aie be releſe to my wo.
But what and ſhe my balis bete,
And be to me curteis and ſwete?
She is in nothing full certain;
Lovirs ſhe put in full grete pain,

Digitized by Google

And makith 'hem with wo to dele:
Her faire beheste decevith sele,
For she woll behote sikirly
And failin aftir uttirly.
Ah! that is a full noious thing,
For many' a lovir in loving
Hangeth upon her, and trustith fast,
Whiche lese ther travaile at the last.
Of thing to comme she wote right nought,
Therefore if it be wisely sought
Her counsaile folie is to take;
For many times whan she woll make
A full gode syllogisme, I drede
That aftirwarde there shall in dede
Folowe an ill conclusion:
This put me in confusion,
For many times I have it sene
That many have begilid bene
For trust that thei have set in Hope,
Whiche fell 'hem aftirward a-slope.

But nath'les yet gladly she wold
That he that woll him with her hold
Had all timis her purpose clere
Withoutin deceipt any where;
That she desirith sikirly;
Whan I her blamed I did foly.

Digitized by Google

But what availith her gode will
Whan ſhe ne maie ſtaunche my ſtound ill?
That helpith lite that ſhe maie doe,
Out take beheſte unto my wo,
And heſtè certain in no wiſe
Without ifete is not to preiſe.
  Whan heſte and dede a ſondir vary
Thei doin a gretè contrary:
Thus am I poſſid up and doune
With dole, thought, and confuſioune:
Of my diſeſe there is no nomber,
Daungir and Shamè me encomber,
Dredè alſo and Jeloſie,
And Wickid Tong, full of envie,
Of whiche the ſharpe and cruill ire
Full oft me put in grete martire:
Thei have my joiè fully let,
Sith Bialacoil thei have beſhet
Fro me in priſon wickidly,
Whom I love ſo entierly,
That it wollin my banè be
But I the ſonir maie him ſe.
  And yet moreovir, worſt of all,
There' is ſet to kepe, foule her befall!
A rimplid vecke ferre ronne in age,
Frouning and yel'we' in her viſage,
Whiche in awaite lieth daie and night,
That none of him maie have a ſight.

Digitized by Google

Now mote my ſorowe enforced be;
Full ſothe it is that Love yafe me
Thre wondir yeftis of his grace,
Whiche I have lorne now in this place,
Sithe thei ne maie withoutin drede
Helpin but lite who takith hede,
For here availith no Swetè Thought,
And Swetè Speche helpith right nought,
The thirde was callid Swete Loking,
That now is lorne without leſing.
Yeftis were faire, but nat forthy
Thei helpin me but ſimpilly
But Bialacoil loſid be
To gone at large and to be fre;
For him my life lieth all in doute
But if he come the rathir oute.
Alas! I trowe it woll nat ben,
For how ſhould I ere more him ſene?
He maie nat out, and that is wrong,
Bicauſe the tourè is ſo ſtrong:
How ſhould he' out, or by whoſe proweſſe,
Out of ſo ſtrong a fortireſſe?
By me certain it n'ill be doe,
God wotte I have no witte therto,
But well I wote I was in rage
Whan I to Love did my homage;

Digitized by Google

Who was the cauſe (in ſothfaſtneſſe)
But her ſelf Damè Idilneſſe,
Whiche me conveide through fàire praiere
To' entir into that faire vergere?
She was to blamè me to leve,
The whiche now doeth me ſorè greve:
A fol'is worde is nought to trowe,
Ne worthe an apple for to lowe;
Men ſhould him ſnibbe bittirlie:
At primè temps of his folie:
I was a fole, and ſhe me leved,
Through whom I am right nought releved:
She accompliſhid all my will
That now me grevith wondir ill.

Reſon me ſayid, What ſhould fall
A fole my ſelf I maie well call,
That Love aſide I had not laidd,
And trowid that Dame Reſon ſaied;
Reſon had bothè ſkill and right
Whan ſhe me blamed with all her might
To medle' of Love, that hath me ſhent,
But certain now I woll repent.

And ſhould I repent? naie, parde,
A falſe traitour than ſhould I be:
The devil's engins would me take
If evir I Love would forſake,

Digitized by Google

Or Bialacoil falſly betraie.
Should I at miſchief hate him? naie,
Sithe he now for his curtiſie
Is in priſon of Jelouſie;
Curtiſie certain did he me
So moche it maie not yoldin be:
Whan he the haie paſſin me lete
To kiſſe the Roſè fáire and ſwete
Should I therefore conne him maugre?
Naie, certainly, it ſhall nat be,
For Love ſhall nevir, ſave gode will,
Here of me ne through worde or will
Offence or complaint more or leſſe
Neithir of Hope nor Idleneſſe;
For certis it were wrong that I
Hatid 'hem for ther curtiſie.
There is not els but ſuffre and thinke;
And wakin whan I ſhouldè winke,
Abide in hope till Love through chaunce
Sende me ſoccour or allegaunce,
Expectaunt aie till I maie mete
To gettin mercie of that ſwete.
  Whilom I thinke how Love to me
Sayid that he would take at gre
My ſervice if unpacience
Ycauſid me to doen offence;
He ſaied, In thanke I ſhall it take,
And high maiſtir eke the ymake,

Digitized by Google

If Wickidneſſe ne reve it the,
But, ſone, I trowe that ſhall nat be.
Theſe were his wordis by and by,
It ſemed he lovid me truely.
New is there not but ſerve him wele
If that I thinke his thanke to fele:
My gode, mine harme, lithe whole in me,
In Love maie no defaute ybe,
For true Love ne failed nevir man;
Sithly the faute mote nedis than,
As God forbide, be founde in me,
And how it cometh I can not ſe.
Now let it gone as it maie go,
Wher Love woll ſoccour me or ſlo,
He maie do wholly on me his will;
I am ſo ſore ybounde him till
From his ſervice I maie not fiene,
For life and deth without wene
Is in his hande; I maie nat cheſe;
He maie me doe bothe winne and leſe;
And ſithe ſo ſore he doeth me greve,
Yet if my luſt he would achieve,
To Bialacoil godely to be,
I yeve no force what fell on me;
For though I die, as I mote nede,
I praie Love of his godelihede
To Bialacoil doe gentilneſſe,
For whom I live in ſoche diſtreſſe

Digitized by Google

That I mote dyin for penaunce;
But firſt withoutin repentaunce
I' will me confeſſe in gode entent,
And make in haſte my teſtament,
As lovirs doin that felin ſmerte.
To Bialacoil leve I mine herte
All whole, withoutin departing
Or doubleneſſe or repenting.

Coment Raiſon vient a L'amant.

Thus as I madin my paſſage
In compleint and in cruill rage,
And I n'ot where to finde a leche
That couthe unto mine helping eche,
Sodainly again comin doun
Out of her toure I ſawe Reſoun,
Diſcrete and wiſe, and full pleſaunt,
And of her porte full avenaunt:
The right waie ſhe take unto me,
Whiche ſtode in grete perplexite,
That was poſſid in every ſide,
That I n'iſt where I might abide,
Till ſhe, demurely ſadde of chere,
Sayid to me as ſhe came nere;
Mine owne frende, art thou agreved?
How is this quarell yet acheved
Of Lov'is ſide? anon me tell
Haſt thou not yet of love thy fill?

Art thou nat werie' of thy ſervice
That the hath grevid in ſoche wiſe?
What joie haſte thou in thy loving?
Is it a ſwete or bittir thing?
Canſt thou yet cheſin, let me ſe,
What beſt thy ſuccour mightin be?
Thou ſerviſt a full noble lorde,
That maketh the thrall for thy rewarde,
Whiche aie renewith thy tourment,
With folie ſo he hath the blent:
Thou fell in miſchief thilkè daie
Whan thou diddiſt, the ſothe to ſaie,
To him obeiſaunce and homage:
Thou wroughtiſt nothing as the ſage
Whan thou became his liegè man;
Thou diddiſt a grete folie than:
Thou wiſtiſt nat what fell therto,
With what lorde thou haddiſt to doe;
If that thou haddiſt him well knowe
Thou haddiſt nought be brought ſo lowe,
For if that thou wiſte what it were
Thou n'oldiſt ſerve him halfe a yere,
No, nat a weke nor halfe a daie,
Ne yet an houre without delaie:
Ne nevir I loved paramours,
His lordſhip is ſo full of ſhours:
Knowiſt him ought,
L'amaunt? Ye, Dame, parde.

Digitized by Google

Raiſoun. Naie, naie. L'amaunt. Yes I.
Raiſoun. Wherefore, let ſe.
L'amaunt. Of that he ſayid I ſhould be
Glad to have ſoche a lorde as he,
And maiſtir of ſoche ſeignorie.
Raiſoun. Knoweſt him no more?
L'amaunt. Naie, certis I,
Save that he yafe me rulis there,
And went his waie I ne wiſt where,
And I abode bounde in balaunce:
Lo, there a noble cognifaunce!

Raiſoun.

But I woll that thou knowe him now
Ginning and ende, ſithin that thou
Art ſo anguiſhous and ſo mate,
Disfigurid out of aſtate,
There maie no wreche have more of wo,
Ne catife non endurin ſo;
It were to every man fitting
Of his lorde to have knowleging,
For if thou knewe him out of dout
Lightly thou ſhouldiſt ſcapin out
Of thy priſon that marrith the.

L'amaunt.

Yea, Dame, ſithin my lorde is he,
And I his man made with mine honde
I wouldè right faine undirſtonde

To knowin of what kinde he be,
If any would enformè me.

Raiſoun.

I would (ſayid Reſon) the lere,
Sithe thou to lerne haſt ſoche deſire,
And ſhewin the withoutin fable
A thing that is not demonſtrable.
Thou ſhalt knowe withoutin ſcience
And withoutin experience
The thing that maie not knowin be,
Ne wiſt ne ſhewed in no degre,
Thou maieſt the ſothe of it not witten
Although in the it were ywritten;
Thou ſhalt not knowin thereof more
While thou art rulid by his lore,
But unto him that Love will ſtie
The knottè maie unclosid be
Whiche hath to the, as it is founde,
So longe to knitte and not unbounde:
Now ſet well thine entencion
To here of love the diſcripcion.

Lovè it is an hateful peſe,
A fre' acquitaunce without relèſe,
And through the fret full of falſhedè
A ſikirneſſe alkfet in drede;
In hærte is a diſpering hope,
And full of hope it is wanhope;

A wiſe wodneſſe, and voide reſon,
A ſwetè perill in to droun,
An hevie burthin light to bere,
A wickid wawe awaie to were;
It is Charybdis perilous,
Diſagreable and gracious;
It' is diſcordaunce that can acorde,
And accordaunce unto diſcorde;
It is conning without ſcience,
And wiſedom without ſapience,
Witte withoutin diſcrecion,
Havoire without poſſeſſion;
It is like hele and whole ſickeneſſe,
A truſt droupid and dronkineſſe,
And helth all full of maladie,
And charite full of envie,
And angre full of abundaunce,
And a full gredie ſuffiſaunce,
Delite right full of hevineſſe,
And drerineſs full of gladneſſe,
Bittir ſweteneſſe and ſwete errour,
Right evill ſavoured gode ſavour,
A ſin that pardone hath withinne,
And pardone ſpottid without ſinne,
A paine alſo it is joious,
And felonie right pitèous,
Alſo a plaie that ſelde is ſtable,
And ſtedfaſtneſs right mevable,

Digitized by Google

A ſtrength weikid to ſtonde upright,
And a febleneſſe full of might,
Witté unaviſid, ſage folie,
And joiè full of tourmentrie,
A laughtir it is weping aie,
Reſt that travailith night and daie,
Alſo a ſwetè hell it is,
And a ſorowfull paradis,
A pleſaunt gaile and eſie priſoun,
And full of froſtis ſomir ſeſoun,
Primè temps full of froſtis white,
And Maie devoide of all delite,
With ſere braunchis bloſſoms ungrehe,
And newe fruict filled with wintirtene;
It is a ſlowe maie not forbere,
Ragges ribanid with gold to were,
For all ſo well woll Love be ſette
Undir raggis as riche rotchette,
And eke as well by amorettes
In mourning blacke as bright burnettes,
For none is of ſo mokill priſe,
Ne no man foundin is ſo wiſe,
Ne no man ſo high of parage,
Ne no man founde of witte ſo ſage,
No man ſo hardie ne ſo wight,
Ne no man of ſo mokill might,
None ſo fulfillid of bountè,
That he with love maie dauntid be;

Digitized by Google

All the worldè holdith this waie,
Love makith all to gone miſwaie
But it be thei of evill life,
Whom Genius curſid, man and wife,
That wrongly werke again Nature;
None ſoche I love, ne have no cure
Of ſoche as Lov'is ſervauntes ben,
And woll nat by my counſaile fleen,
For I ne preiſin that loving
Where through man at the laſt ending
Shall call 'hem wretchis full of wo,
Love grevith 'hem and ſhendith ſo;
But if thou wolt well Love eſchewe
For to eſcape out of his mewe,
And make all whole the ſorowe ſlake,
No bettir counſaile maieſt thou take
Than thinke to flein well i-wis,
Maie nought helpe els, for wit thou this,
If thou flie it it ſhall flie the,
Folowe' it and folowen ſhall it the.

L'amaunt.

Whan I had herid Reſon ſain,
Whiche had yſpilt her ſpeche in vain,
Dame, (ſayid I) I dare well ſaie
Of this avaunt me well I maie,
That from your ſchole ſo deviaunt
I am, that nere the more avaunt

Right nought I am through your doctrine;
I dulle undir your diſcipline;
I wot no more than I wiſte ever,
To' me ſo contrarie and ſo fer
Is every thing that ye me lere,
And yet I can it all by partivere;
Mine herte foryeteth thereof right nought;
It is ſo writtin in my thought,
And depe gravin it is ſo tender,
That all mine herte I can it render,
And rede it ovir communely,
But to my ſelf lewdiſt am I.

But ſithe ye love diſcrivin ſo,
And lacke and preiſe it bothè two,
Definith it into this letter,
That I maie thinke on it the better,
For I herd nevir defined here,
And wilfully I would it lere:
Raiſoun. If love be ſerchid well and ſought,
It is a ſickeneſſe of the thought,
Annexid and knedde betwixt tweine,
Which male and female with o cheine
So frelie bindeth, that thei n'ill twinne
Whedir thereof thei leſe or winne:
The rote ſpringith through hote brenning
In to diſordinate deſiring

Digitized by Google

For to kiſſin and to enbrace,
And at ther luſt them to ſolace;
Of othir thing Love retchith nought,
But ſetteth ther herte and all ther thought
More for ther delectacioun
Than any procreacioun
Of other fruict by engendrure,
Whiche love to God is nat pleſure,
For of ther bodie fruicte to get
Thei yeve no force, thei are ſo ſet
Upon delite to plaie in fere;
And ſome have alſo this manere
To fainin 'hem for lovè ſeke;
Soche love I preiſe not at a leke,
For paramours thei doc but faine,
To lovin truely thei diſdaine;
Thei falſin ladies traitourſly,
And ſwerne 'hem othis uttirly,
With many' a leſing, many' a fable,
And all thei findin diſceivable.
And whan thei han ther luſt ygetten
The hote ernes thei all foryetten;
Women the harme byin full fore;
But men this thinkin evirmore,
The laſſe harme is, ſo mote I the,
Diſceive them than diſceivid be,
And namily where thei ne maie
Findin none othir mene ne waie,

Digitized by Google

For I wote well in ſothfaſtneſſe,
That who doeth now his buſineſſe
With any woman for to dele
For any luſt that he maie fele,
But if it be for engendrure
He doeth treſpaſſe I you enſure,
For he ſhould ſettin all his will
To getten a likely thing him till,
And to ſuſtain, if that he might,
And kepin forth by kind'is right
His owne likèneſſe and ſemblable;
For bicauſe all' is corrumpable,
And failin ſhould ſucceſſioun,
Ne were there generacioun,
Our ſect'is ſtrenè for to ſave,
Whan fadre' or mothir arne in grave
Ther childrin ſhulde whan they ben dede
Full diligent ben in ther ſtede
To uſe that worke on ſoche a wiſe
That one maie through an othir riſe;
Therefore ſet kinde therein delite,
For men therein ſhould 'hem delite,
And of that dedè be not erke,
But oftè ſithis haunt that werke,
For none would drawe thereof a draught
Ne were delite whiche hath him caught;
This had ſubtill Dame Nature,
For none goeth right I the enſure,

Digitized by Google

Ne hath entten whole ne parfite,
For ther desire is for delite,
The whiche fortenid cresc, and eke
The plaie of love, for oft thei seke
And thrall 'hem self, thei be so nice,
Unto the prince of every vice,
For of eche sinne it is the rote
Unlefull lust, though it be sote,
And of all evill the racine,
As Tullius can determine,
Whiche in his time was full sage,
In a boke whiche he made of age,
Where that more he ypraisith Elde,
Though he be crokid and unwelde,
And more of commendacioun
Than Youth in his discripcioun;
For youth set bothe man and wife
In all perill of soule and life,
And perill is, but men have grace,
The perill of youth for to pace
Without any deth or distresse,
It is so full of wildèneesse,
So oft it doeth shame and domage
To him or unto his linage,
It ledith man now up now doun,
In mokill dissolucioun,
And maketh him love ill companie,
And lede his life disrulisie,

Digitized by Google

And halte him paied with none eſtate;
Within himſelf is ſoche debate
He chaungith purpoſe and entent,
And yaltè into ſome covent,
To livin aftir ther empriſe,
And leſith fredome and fraunchiſe
That Nature in him had yſet,
The whiche again he maie not get,
If there he make his manſion,
For to abide profeſſion;
Though for a time his herte abſent
It maie not faile he ſhall repent,
And eke abidin thilkè daie
To leve' his abite and gon his waie,
And leſeth his worſhip and his name,
And dare not come again for ſhame,
But all his life he doeth ſo mourne,
Bicauſe he dare not home retourne,
Fredome of kinde ſo loſt hath he
That nevir maie recurid be,
But that if God him grauntin grace
That he maie, er he hennis pace,
Contein undir obedience,
Through the vertue of pacience;
For youth ſet man in all folie,
In unthrift and in ribaudrie,
In lecherie and in outrage,
So oft it chaungith of corage:

Digitized by Google

Youth ginnith oft ſoche a bargain
That maie not end withoutin pain:
In grete perill is ſet Youth-hede,
Delite ſo doeth his bridill lede:
Delite this hangith, drede the nought,
Bothe mann'is bodie and his thought;
Onily through youth'is chambere,
That to doen ill is cuſtomere,
And of naught elis takith hede
But onely folkis for to lede
Into diſport and wildèneſſe
So froward is it from ſadneſſe,
But elde ydrawith 'hem therfro;
Who wote it not he maie well go,
And mo of 'hem that now arne old,
That whilom youth yhad in hold;
Whiche yet remembre' of tendir age
How it 'hem brought in many' a rage,
And many' a folie therin wrought,
But now that elde hath 'hem through ſought
Thei repent 'hem of ther folie
That youth 'hem put in jeopardie,
In perill and in mokill woe,
And made 'hem oft amiſſe to doe,
And ſewin evill companie
And riot and advouterie.

Digitized by Google

But Eldè gan againe reſtraine
From ſuchè foly and refraine,
And ſet men by her ordinaunce
In gode rule and in governaunce;
But ill ſhe ſpendith her ſerviſe,
For no man wol her love ne preiſe;
She is hatid, this wote I wele,
Her acqueintaunce would no man ſele,
Ne han of Eldè companie,
Men hate to be of her alie,
For no man wold becomin olde,
Ne die whan he is yonge and bolde;
And Elde mervailith right gretely
Whan thei remembre 'hem inwardly
Of many' a perillous empriſe
Whiche that thei wrought in ſondry wiſe,
How evir thei might without blame
Eſcape awaie withoutin ſhame,
In youth without any domage,
Without repreſe of ther linage,
Loſſe of membre, ſheding of blode,
Perill of deth, or loſſe of gode.
Wotiſt thou nat where Youth abit,
That men ſo preiſin in ther wit?
With Delite ſhe yhalte ſojour,
For both thei dwellin in o tour:

Digitized by Google

As long as Youthe is in ſeſon
Thei dwellin in one manſion:
Delite of Youth woll have ſervice
To do what ſo he woll deviſe,
And Youth is redy evirmore
For to obey for ſmerte or ſore
Unto Delite, and him to yeve
Her ſervice while that ſhe maie live.
Where Elde abitte I wol the tell
Shortily, and no while ydwelle,
For thidir behoveth the to go,
Yf Deth in youthe the not ſlo;
Of this journey thou maiſte not faile.
With her Labour and eke Travaile
Lodgid ben, with Sorow and Wo,
That nevir out of her court go,
Paine and Diſtreſſe, Sickeneſſe and Ire,
And Melan'coly, that angry fire,
Ben of her paleis ſenatours,
Groning and grutching her herbegeours:
The day and night her to tourment
With cruill Deth thei her preſent,
And tellin her erliche and late
That Death ſtondeth armid at her gate;
Than bring thei to her remembraunce
The foly dedes of her enfaunce,
Whiche cauſin her to mourne in wo
That youth hath her begilid ſo,

Digitized by Google

Whiche ſodainly awaie is haſted;
She weped the time that ſhe hath waſted,
Complaining of the preteritte
And the preſent, that nat abitte,
And of her oldè vanite,
That but aforne her ſhe maie ſe
In the future ſome ſmale ſocoure
To leggin her of her doloure,
To graunt her time of repentaunce,
For her ſinnis to do penaunce,
And at the laſt ſo her governe,
To winne the joye that is eterne,
Fro whiche go backwarde youth hir made,
In vanite to drowzie and wade;
For preſent time abidith nought,
It is more ſwiſte than any thought;
So litill while it doth endure
That there ne is compte ne meſure.
But how that evir the game go,
Who liſt love joye and mirth alſo
Of love, be it or he or ſhe,
Or hie or lowe, who ſo it be,
In frute thei ſhouldin 'hem delite,
Ther parte thei maie not ellis quite,
To ſave 'hem ſelf in honeſte;
And yet full many one I ſe
Of women, ſothly for to ſaine,
That deſirin and wouldin faine

The plaie of love, thei be ſo wilde,
And not coveite to go with childe;
And if with childe thei be perchaunce,
Thei wol it holde a grete miſchaunce;
But what ſo evir wo thei fele
Thei wol not plainin, but concele,
But it be any fole or nice,
In whome that ſhame hath no juſtice;
For to delite echone thei drawe
That haunt this worke, both hie and lawe,
Save ſuche that arne worth right nought,
That for money wol be ybought;
Suche love I preiſin in no wiſe
Whan it is given for covetiſe;
I preiſe no woman, though ſhe' is wode,
That yeveth her ſelfe for any gode,
For litill ſhould a man ytelle
Of her that wil her body ſelle,
Be ſhe a maide or be ſhe wife,
That quicke wol ſelle her by her life,
How faire chere that evir ſhe make,
He is a wretche I undirtake
That love ſuche one, for ſwete or ſoure,
Though ſhe him called her paramoure,
And laugheth on him, and maketh him feſt,
For certainly no ſuche beſt
To be lovid is nat worthy,
Or berin the name of Drury;

Digitized by Google

None ſhould her pleſe, but he wer wode;
That wol diſpoile him of his gode:
Yet nathèleſſe I wol not ſaie
That ſhe for ſolace and for plaie
Maie a jewil or othir thing
Take of her lov'is fre yeving,
But that ſhe aſke it in no wiſe
For drede of ſhame or covetiſe;
And ſhe of hers maie him certaine
Without ſclaundir yevin againe,
And joyne ther hertes togidir ſo
In love, and take and yeve alſo:
Trowe nat that I wollin 'hem twinne
Whan in ther love there is no ſinne;
I wol that thei togidir go,
And done al that thei han ado,
As curtis ſhould and debonaire,
And in ther love berin 'hem faire
Withoutin vice, both he and ſhe,
So that alwaie in honeſte
Fro folly Love to kepe 'hem clere,
That brennith hertis with his fere,
And that ther love in any wiſe
Be devoide of all covetiſe.
Gode love ſhould engendrid be
Of trewè hert, juſte and feere,
And not of ſuche as ſet ther thought
To have ther luſt and ellis nought,

So are thei caught in Lov'is lace
Frewly for bodily ſolace;
Fleſhely delite is ſo preſent
With the, that ſet al thine entent
Withoutin more, what ſhould I gloſe?
For to gettin and have the Roſe,
Whiche makith the ſo mate and wode
That thou deſireſt none other gode:
But thou art not an inche the nerre,
But evre' abideſt in ſorroue' and werre,
As in thy face it is yſene;
It makith the bothe pale and lene;
Thy might, thy vertue, gothe awaie,
A ſory geſt in godè faie.
Thou harboriſt than in thine inne,
The god of Love whan thou let inne;
Wherfore I rede thou ſhette him oute,
Or he ſhal greve the out of doute,
For to thy profite it wol turne,
If he no more with the ſojourne.
In grete miſchefe and forow ſonken
Ben hertis that of love arne dronken,
As thou peraventure knowen ſhall
Whan thou haſt loſt thy time all,
And ſpent thy thought in idilneſſe,
In waſte, and woful luſtineſſe.
Yf thou maiſt live the time to ſe
Of love for to delivered be

Thy time thou ſhalt bewepè ſore,
The whiche nevir thou maiſt reſtore,
For time yloſt, as men may ſe,
For nothing may recovered be:
And if thou ſcape yet at the laſte
Fro Love that hath the ſo faſte
Yknitte and boundin in his lace,
Certaine I holde it but a grace;
For many one, as it is ſeine,
Have loſte and ſpent alſo in veine
In his ſervice without ſocour
Body and ſoule, gode and treſour,
And witte and ſtrength, and eke richeſſe,
Of whiche thei had nevir redreſſe.

L'amant.

Thus taught and prechid hath Reſon,
But Love yſpilte hath her ſermon,
That was ſo impid in my thought
That her doctrine I ſet at nought,
And yet ne ſaide ſhe nevre' a dele
That I ne underſtode it wele
Wordè by wordè the matir all;
But unto Love I was ſo thrall,
Whiche callith ovir all his praie,
He chaſith ſo my thoughtis aie,
And holdeth mine herte undir his ſele
As truſty' and trewe as any ſtele,

Digitized by Google

So that I no devocion
Ne haddè in the wiſe ſermon
Of Dame Reſon, ne of her rede
I toke no ſojour in mine hede,
For allè yede out at one ere.
That in that othir ſhe did lere;
Fully on me ſhe loſt her lore;
Her ſpeche me grevid wondir ſore,

That unto her for ire I ſaide,
For angir as I did abraide,
Dame, and is it your will algate
That I not love but that I hate
All men, as ye me now do teche?
For if I do aftir your ſpeche,
Sith that you ſeine love is not gode,
Than muſt I nedis ſay with mode,
Yf I it leve, in hatrid aie
Livin, and voidin love awaie
Ferrè from me a ſinful wretche,
Yhatid of allè that tetche,
I may not go none othir gate,
For eithir muſt I love or hate,
And if I hatin men of newe
Morè than love it wol me rewe,
As by your preching ſemith me,
For Love nothing ne praiſith the:

Ye yeve gode counſaile ſikirly
That prechith me al day that I
Ne ſhould not Lov'is lore alowe;
He were a fole woulde you not trowe;
In ſpeche alſo ye han me taught
Anothir love that knowen is naught,
Whiche I have herde you not repreve:
To love eche othir, by your leve,
If ye would definin it me,
I wouldin gladly here, to ſe
At the leſt if I mowin lere
Of ſondry lovis the manere.

Raiſon.

Certis, frende, a grete fole art thou,
Whan that thou nothing wolt alow
Whiche that I for thy profite ſaie;
Yet wol I ſaie the more in faie,
For I am redy at the leſt
To accompliſhin thy requeſt;
But I n'ot where it wol aveile;
In vaine perav'enture I travaile.
Lovè there is in ſondrie wiſe,
Right as I ſhall the here dèviſe.
For ſome love leful is and gode,
I mene not that whiche maketh the wode,
And bringith the in many a fitte,
And raviſheth fro the al thy witte,

It is ſo marveilous and queint;
With ſuche love be no more aqueint.

Comment Raiſon diffiniſt Amuſete.

Love of frendſhippe alſo there is
Whiche makith no man don amis,
Of wille yknitte betwixtin two,
That wol not breke for wele ne wo,
Whiche long is likely to contune,
Whan wil and godes ben in commune,
Groundid by Godd'is ordinaunce,
All whole withoutin diſcordaunce,
With them yholding commaunce,
Of al ther gode in charite,
That there be none exceptioun
Through chaunging of ententioun,
That eche helpe othir at ther nede,
And wiſely hele both worde and dede,
Trewe of mening, devoide of flouthe,
For wit is nought withoutin trouthe,
So that the t'one dare all his thought
Saine to his frende, and ſparin nought,
As to him ſelfe, without dreding
To be diſcovered by wrying,
For glad is that conjunctioun
Whan there is none ſuſpectioun
Betwixtin 'hem whiome thei wold prove,
That trewe and perfite weren in love;

For no man may be amiable
But if he be ſo ferme and ſtable
That Fortune chaunge him not ne blinde,
But that his frende alway him finde
Bothe pore and riche in one eſtate,
For if his frende through any gate
Wol complaine of his poverte
He ſhould not bide ſo long til he
Of his helping doth him require,
For gode dede done thorough prayire
Is ſolde and bought to dere a-wis
To hert that of grete valure is,
For hert fulfiiled of gentilneſſe
Can evill demene his diſtreſſe;
And man that worthy is of name
To aſkin oftin hath grete ſhame.
A gode man brenneth in his thought
For ſhame whan that he aſkith ought;
He hath grete thought, and dredith aie
For his diſeſe whan he ſhal praie
His frende leſt that he warnid be
Till he preve his ſtabilite;
But whan that he hath foundin one
That truſty is and trewe as ſtone,
And hath aſſayid him at all,
And founde him ſtedfaſt as a wall,
And of his frendſhippe be certaine,
He ſhal him ſhewe bothe joie and paine,

And all that he dare thinke or saie,
Withoutin shame, as he well maie,
For how should he ashamid be
Of suche an one as I tolde the?
For whan he wot his secret thought
The third shall know therof right nought,
For twey in nombre' is bet than thre
In every counsaile and secre:
Repreve he dredith nevre' a dele
Who that beset his wordis wele,
For every wise man out of drede
Can kepe his tong till he se nede.
And folis can not holde ther tonge;
A fol'is belle is sone yronge;
Yet shall a trewe frende doin more
To helpe his felowe of his sore,
And socour him whan he hath nede
In all that he may done in dede,
And gladdir that he him plesith
Than his felowe that he esith:
And if he do nat his request
He shal as mochil him molest
As his felowe, bicause that he
Maie not fulfill his volunte
All fully as he hath required.
If both the hertis Love hath fired

Digitized by Google

Bothe joye and wo thei ſhall departe,
And take evinly eche his parte,
Halfe his anoye he ſhal have aie,
And comforte him what that he maie,
And of his bliſſe parte ſhal he,
If love wollin departid be.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Part of The Romaunt of the Roſe,	5—198

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
Dec. 28. 1782.

END OF VOLUME SEVENTH.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From *Urry's* Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From *Tyrwhitt's* Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----
Of ditees and of songes glade,
The which he---made,
The londe fullfilled is over all. GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----
Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,
Sith of our langage he was the lode-steere----
That made first to dystylle and rayne
The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence
Into our tunge thrugh his excellence. LYDGATE.

The honour of Englisch tong is dede----
My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
Universel fadir in science----
This londis veray tresour and richesse----
The firste fynder of our fayre langage. OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,
Mylky fountane, clere strand, and rois riall,
Of fresche endite throw Albioun iland braid. DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rethouris all,
As in oure toung flour imperial
That raise in Brittane evir, quha reidis right
Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,
The fresche enamilt termes celestiall:
This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,
Surmounting every toung terrestriall
As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnight. DUNBAR.

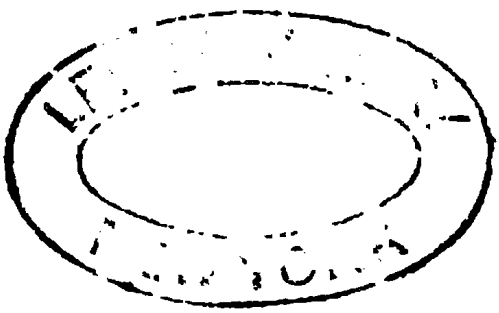
VOL. VIII.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. VIII.

CONTAINING HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE,
TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale ſain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath ſayd hem in ſwiche Engliſh as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not ſayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath ſayd hem in another——
Who ſ. . at wol his large Volume ſeke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

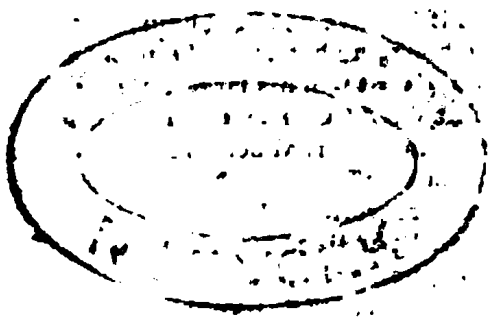
Dan CHAUCER, well of Engliſh undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd——
Old Dan Geffrey, in whoſe gentle ſpright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell——
He whilſt he lived was the ſoveraigne head
Of ſhepherds all—— SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning ſtar,
To us diſcovers day from far;
His light thoſe miſts and clouds diſſolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he deſcending to the ſhades
Darkneſs again the age invades. DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who firſt with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers——His legends blithe
He ſang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eſtate and age
The faſhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying——
Him who in times——
Dark and untaught began with charming verſe
To tame the rudeneſs of his native land. AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

And whilom of this unite
Spake Tullius in a dite,
A man ſhould makin his requeſt
Unto his frende that is honeſt,
And he godely ſhould it fulfill,
But it the more were out of ſkill,
And otherwiſe not graunt therto,
Except only in cauſis two.
Yf men his frende to dethe would drive
Let him be beſy to' ſave his live.
Alſo if men wollen him aſſaile,
Of his worſhip to make him faile,
And hindrin him of his renoun,
Let him with ful entencioun
His devir done in eche degre,
That his frendè ne ſhamid be.
In theſe two caſis with his might,
Taking no kepe to ſkill nor right,
As ferre as love may him excuſe,
This ought no man for to refuſe.
This love that I have tolde to the
Is nothing contrarie to me;
This wol I that thou folowe wele,
And leve the t'othir every dele;

Digitized by Google

This love to vertue al entendeth,
The t'othir folis blent and shendeth:
An othir love also there is
That is contrary unto this,
Which desire is so constrainid
That it ne is but will fainid;
Away fro trouth it doth so varie
That to gode love it is contrarie,
For it maymith in many wise
Sikè hertis with covetise;
All in winning and in profite
Suche love ysettith his delite:
This love so hangith in balaunce,
That if it lese his hope parchaunce
Of lucre that he' is set upon
It woll failin and quenche anon,
For no man maie be amorous,
Ne in his living vertuous,
But if he lovin more in mode
Men for 'hem selfe than for ther gode;
For love that profite doth abide
Is false, and bidith not no tide:
Soche love comith of Dame Fortune,
That litil while woll contune,
For it shall chaungin wondir sone,
And take eclips as doth the mone,
Whan that she is from us ylet
Through erth, that betwixtin is set

The ſonne and her, as it may fall,
Be it in partie or in all:
The ſhadowe makith her bemes merke,
And her hornis to ſhewin derke
That part where ſhe hath loſt her light
Of Phebus fully and the ſight,
Till whan the ſhadowe' is ovir paſte
She' is enlumined agein as faſte
Through the brightnes of the ſonne bemes,
That yevith to' her againe her lemes:
That love is right of ſuche nature,
Now is it faire and now obſcure,
Now bright, now clipſy of manere,
And whilom dimme and whilom clere,
As ſone as poverte ginnith take,
With mantil and with wedis blake
Hidith of love the light away,
That into night it tournith day,
It may not ſein Richeſſe ſhine
Till that the blacke ſhadowis fine,
For whan that Richeſſe ſhinith bright
Love recovereth ayen his light,
And whan it failith he wol flit,
And as ſhe greveth ſo grevith it.
Of this love herith what I ſaie:
The riche men are ylovid aie,
And namely tho that ſparande bene,
That wol not waſhe ther hertis clene

Of the filthe nor of the vice
Of gredy brenning avarice.
The riche man ful fonde is i-wis
That wenith that he lovid is;
If that his hert it underſtode
It is not he; it is his gode:
He may wel wetin in his thought
His gode is loved and he right nought;
For if he be a nigarde eke
Men wol not ſet by him a leke,
But hatin him, this is the ſothe.
Lo what profite his catil dothe!
Of every man that may him ſe
It getteth him nought but enmite,
But he amende him of that vice,
And know himſelfe he is not wiſe.
Certis he ſhould aie frendly be
To get him love, alſo ben fre,
Or els he is not wiſe ne ſage,
No more than is a gote ramage.
That he not lovith his dede proveth,
Whan he his richeſſe ſo well loveth
That he wol hide it aie and ſpare,
His porè frendis ſene forfare,
To kepin aie his ill purpoſe,
Till that for drede his eyin cloſe,
And til a wickid deth him take
Him had levir a fondre ſhake,

Digitized by Google

And let al' his limmes a ſondre rive,
Than leve his richeſſe in his live;
He thinketh to part it with no man;
Certain no love is in him than,
For how ſhould love within him be
Whan in his hert is no pite?
That he treſpaſith well I wate,
For eche man knowith his eſtate,
For wel him ought to be reproved
That lovith nought ne is not loved.
But ſithe we arne to Fortune comen,
And hath our ſermon of her nomen,
A wondir will I tell the now,
Thou herdiſt nere ſuche one I trow;
I n'ot where thou me levin ſhall,
Although ſothfaſtneſſe it be all,
As it is writtin, and is ſothe,
That unto men more profite dothe
The frowarde fortune and contraire
Than doth the ſote and debonaire;
And if the thinke it is doutable,
It is through argument provable,
For Fortune debonaire and ſofte
Yfalſith and begilith ofte,
For liche a mothir ſhe can cheriſhe,
And milkin as dothe a norice,
And of her gode to him ydeles,
And yeveth 'hem parte of her jowles,

With grete richis and dignite,
And 'hem ſhe hoteth ſtabilite
In a ſtate that is nothing ſtable,
But chaunging aie and variable,
And fedith 'hem with glory veine,
And worldely bliſſe nothing certeine:
Whan ſhe 'hem ſettith on her whele
Than wenin thei to be right wele,
And in ſo ſtable ſtate withall
That nevir thei wene for to fall;
And whan thei ſette ſo high to be
Thei wene to have in certainte
Of hertly frendis to grete nombre,
That nothing might ther ſtate encombre;
Thei truſt 'hem ſo on every ſide,
Wening with 'hem thei would abide
In every perill and miſchaunce
Withoutin chaunce or variaunce
Bothè of catil and of gode,
And alſo for to ſpende ther blode,
And al ther membris for to ſpill,
Onily to fulfill ther will:
Thei maken it whole in many wiſe,
And hotin 'hem ther full ſervice,
How ſore ſo that it do 'hem ſmerte
Into ther very nakid ſherte;
Herte and hande alſo whole thei give,
For all the time that thei may live,

Digitized by Google

So that with this ther flatiry
Thei makin folis glorifie
Onely of ther wordis ſpeking,
And han chere of a rejoyſing,
And trow 'hem as the Evangile;
And it is al falſhede and gile,
As thei ſhal afterwardis ſe;
Whan thei arne fal in poverte,
And ben of gode and catil bare,
Than ſhould thei ſene who frendis ware,
For of an hundrid certainly,
Nor of a thouſande ful ſcarſly,
Ne ſhall thei finde unnethis one
Whan poverte is comen upon.
For thus Fortune that I of tell,
With men whan that her luſt to dwell,
Maketh 'hem to leſe ther coniſaunce,
And noriſheth 'hem in ignoraunce.
But frowarde Fortune and perverſe,
Whan high eſtates ſhe doth reverſe,
And makith 'hem to toumble doune
Of her whele with a ſodaine tourne,
And from ther richeſſe dothe 'hem ſle,
And plongith 'hem in poverte,
As a ſtepmothir envious,
And laieth a plaiſtir dolorous
Unto ther hertis woundid egre,
Whiche is not tempered with vinegre,

Digitized by Google

But with poverte' and indigence,
For to ſhewe by experience
That ſhe is Fortune verilie,
In whom no man ne ſhould affie,
Nor in her yeſtis have fiaunce,
She is ſo ful of variaunce.
Thus can ſhe makin hie and lowe,
Whan thei from richeſſe arnè throwe,
Fully to knowin without were
Frende of affecte and frende of chere,
And whiche in love weren trew and ſtable,
And whiche alſo weren variable,
Aſtir Fortunè ther goddeſſe,
In poverte', eithir in richeſſe,
For all that yeveth here out of drede
Unhappe yberith it in dede,
For Infortunè lette not one
Of frendis whan Fortune is gone,
I mene tho frendis that woll ſle
Anone as entrith poverte;
And yet thei wol not leve 'hem ſo,
But in eche place where that thei go
Thei callin 'hem wretche, ſcorne, and blame,
And of ther miſhappe 'hem diffame,
And namely ſuche as in richeſſe
Pretendith moſte of ſtableneſſe,
Whan that they ſawe 'hem ſet on loſte,
And werin of 'hem ſucoured ofte,

Digitized by Google

And moſte iholpe in all ther nede,
But now thei take no manir hede,
But ſeine in voice of flatirie
That now appereth ther folie
Ovir al wher ſo that thei fare,
And ſinge, Go, farewel, Feldefare.
Allè ſuche frendis I beſhrewe,
For of trewe frendes there be to fewe,
But ſothfaſt frendes, what ſo betide,
In every fortune wollen abide;
Thei han ther hertes in ſuche nobleſſe
That thei n'il love for no richeſſe,
Nor for that Fortune may 'hem ſende
Thei wollen 'hem ſocour and defende,
And chaungin for ſofte ne for ſore;
For who his frende loveth evirmore,
Though men drawe ſwerdis him to ſlo,
Thei may not hewe ther love a two;
But if in caſe that I ſhall ſay,
For pride and ire leſe it he may,
And for reprove by nicete,
And diſcovering of privite
With tongè wounding, as felon,
Through venemous detraccion.
Frende in this caſe wol gon his way,
For nothing greve him more ne may,
And for nought ellis wol he fle
If he love in ſtabilite:

And certaine he is well begone
Among a thouſande that findeth one,
For there ne may be no richeſſe
Ayenſt frendſhip of worthineſſe,
For it ne may ſo high attaine
As may the valoure, ſothe to ſaine,
Of him that lovith trewe and well:
Frendſhip is more than is catell,
For frende in courte aie bettir is
Than peny is in purſe certis,
And than is Fortune miſhaping,
Whan upon men ſhe is fabling
Thorough miſturning of her chaunce,
And caſtith 'hem out of balaunce.
She maketh through her adverſite
Men ful and clerly for to ſe.
Him that is frende in exiſtence
From him that is by apparence,
For infortune makith anone
To know thy frendis fro thy fone
By experience right as it is,
The whiche is more to praiſe i-wis
Than in muche richeſſe and treſour,
For more depe profite and valour
Poverte', and ſuche adverſite
Before, than doeth proſperite,
For that one yevith coniſaunce,
And t'othir gevith ignoraunce.

Digitized by Google

And thus in poverte' is in dede
Trouthè declarid fro falſhede,
For faint frendis it wol declare,
And trewe alſo, what way they fare;
For whan he was in his richeſſe
Theſe frendis ful of doubleneſſe
Offirid him in many wiſe
Ther herte and body, and ſervice,
What would he then have you to' have bought
To knowin opinly ther thought,
That he now hath ſo clerely ſene?
The laſſe begiled he ſhould have bene
And he had than percevid it,
But Richeſſe n'olde not let him wit;
Wel more avauntage doeth him than,
Sithe that it maketh him a wiſe man,
The great miſchefe that he perceveth
Than doeth richeſſe, that him deceveth:
Richeſſe riche ne ymakith nought
Him that on treſour ſette his thought,
For richeſſe ſtonte in ſuffiſaunce,
And nothing ſtonte in haboundaunce,
For ſuffiſaunce all onily
Makith menne to live richily.

For he that hath but mitchis tweine,
Ne value in his whole demeine,

Digitized by Google

Liveth more at eſe, and more is riche,
Than doith he whiche that is chiche,
And in his barne hath, ſoth to ſaine,
An hundrid mavis of whete graine,
Though he be chapman or marchaunt,
And have of golde many beſaunt,
For in the getting he' hath ſuche wo,
And in the keping drede alſo,
And ſette ere more his beſineſſe
For to encreſe and nat to leſſe,
For to augment and multiply;
And though on hepes that lie him by,
Yet nevir ſhall make his richeſſe
Aſſeth unto his gredineſſe;
But the pore man that retchith nought
Save of his livelode in his thought,
Whiche that he getteth with his travaile,
He dredith nought that it ſhall faile,
Though he have little world'is gode,
Metè and drinke, and eſie fode,
Upon his travaile and living,
And alſo ſuffiſaunt clothing,
Or if in ſickeneſſe that he fall,
And lothè mete and drinke withall,
Though he have not his mete to buie,
He ſhall bethinke him haſtily
To put him out of all daungere,
That he of mete hath no miſtere,

Digitized by Google

Or that he maie with little eke
Be foundin while that he is ſeke,
Or that men ſhall him ſerne in haſte
To live till his ſickeneſſe be paſte
Unto ſome maiſondewe beſide:
He caſte nought what ſhall him betide;
He thinkith nought that evre' he ſhall
Into any ſickeneſſe yfall.

And though it fall, as it maie be,
That all betime ſparin ſhall he
As mokill as ſhall to' him ſuffice
While he is ſicke in any wiſe,
He doith for that he woll be
Contentid with his poverte
Withoutin nede of any man:
So moche in little have he can
He is apaide with his fortune,
And for he n'ill be importune
Unto no wight ne onerous,
Nor of ther godeſſe covetous,
Therefore he ſpareth, it maie well ben,
His pore eſtate for to ſuſtene.

Or if him luſte not for to ſpare,
But ſuffrith forthe as nat yet ware,
At laſte it happeneth, as it maie,
All right unto his laſtè daie,

Digitized by Google

And take the worlde as it would be;
For evir in herte thinkith he
The ſonir that Deth him yſlo
To paradiſe the ſonir go
He ſhall, there for to live in bliſſe
Where that he ſhall no godis miſſe:
Thidir he hopeth God ſhall him ſende
Aftir this wretchid liv'is ende.
Pythagoras himſelf reherſes,
In a boke that The Goldin Verſes
Is cleped, for the nobilite
Of the honorable dite,
  Than whan thou goeſt thy body fro
Fre in the ayre thou ſhalt up go,
And levin all humanite,
And purely live in diete.
He is a fole withoutin were
That trowith have his countrey here.
  In yerth is not our countere,
That maie theſe clerkis ſeine and ſe
In Boece of Conſolacion,
Where it is makid mencion
Of our contre plaine at the eye
By teching of philoſophie,
Where leude men mightin lerin wit,
Who ſo that would tranſlatin it.
If he be ſuche that can well live
Aftir his rentè maiç him yeve,

Digitized by Google

And not desirith more to have
Than maie fro poverte him save.
A wiseman saied, as we maie sene,
Is no man wretched but he it wene,
Be he a king, knight, or ribaude:
Many' a ribaude is merie' and baude
That swinketh and berith daie and night
Many a burthin of grete might,
The whiche doith him lasse offence
For that he suffrith in pacience:
Thei laugh and daunce, thei trippe and sing,
And laie nought up for ther living,
But in the taverne all dispendeth
The winning whiche that God 'hem sendeth;
Than goeth he fardils for to bere
With as gode chere as he did ere:
To swinke and travaile' he not fainith,
For to robbin he disdainith,
But right anon after his swinke
He goeth to taverne for to drinke.
All these are riche in haboundaunce
That can thus havin suffisaunce
Well more than can an usurere,
As God well knowith, without were,
For 'an usurere, so God me se,
Shall nevir for richesse riche be,
But er more pore and indigent,
Scarce, and gredy in his entent.

For ſothe it is, whom it diſpleſe,
There maie no marchaunt live at eſe,
His herte in ſoche a where is ſet
That it quicke brennith for to get,
Ne nevir ſhall though he hath getten,
Though he have golde in garnirs yeten,
For to be nedy he dredeth ſore,
Wherefore to gettin more and more
He ſet his herte and his deſire:
So hote he brennith in the fire
Of covetiſe, that maketh him wode
To purchace othir mennis gode.
He undirfongith a grete pain
That undertaketh to drinke up Sain,
For the more that he drinkith aie
The more he levith, ſothe to ſaie.
Thus is the thruſt of falſe getting,
That laſte evir in coviting,
And the anguiſhe and the diſtreſſe,
With the firè of gredineſſe;
She fightith with him aie and ſtriveth,
So that his herte a ſondir riveth:
Soche gredineſſe him aſſailith
That whan' he moſte hath moſte he failith.
Phiſiciens and advocates
Goin right by the ſamè yates;
Thei ſell ther ſcience for winning,
And haunte ther craft for grete getting;

Digitized by Google

Ther winning is of ſoche ſweteneſſe
That if a man fall in ſickeneſſe
Thei are full glad for ther encrece,
For by ther will withoutin leſe
Evèriche man ſhouldin be ſeke;
Though thei die thei ſet not a leke;
Aftir whan thei the golde have take
Full little care for 'hem thei make:
Thei would fowertie were ſicke at ones,
Ye, two hundrid, in fleſhe and bones,
And yet two thouſande, as I geſſe,
For to encreſin ther richeſſe.
Thei woll not worchin in no wiſe
But for lucre and covetiſe,
For phiſicke ginnith firſt by (phi)
The phiſicien alſo ſothly;
And ſithen it goeth fro ſie to ſie
To truſt on 'hem it is folie,
For thei n'ill in no manir gre
Doin right nought for charité.
Eke in the ſamè ſecte are ſet
All tho that prechin for to get
Worſhips, and honour, and richeſſe;
Ther hertis arne in grete diſtreſſe
That folke livin not holily,
But abovin all ſpecially
Soche as yprechin veinglorie,
And towarde God have no mem'orie,

But forthe as ipocritis trace,
And to ther ſoulis deth purchace,
And outward ſhewing holineſſe,
Though thei be full of curſidneſſe:
Nat liche to the apoſtlis twelve,
Thei deceve othir and 'hem ſelve:
Begilid is the gilir than
For preching of a curſid man:
Though it to othir maie profite
Himſelf it availeth not a mite,
For oft gode predicacioun
Cometh of evill entencioun:
To him nat availith his preching,
All helpe he othir with his teching,
For where thei gode example take
There is he with veinglorie ſhake.
But let us levin theſe prechours,
And ſpeke of 'hem that in ther tours
Hepe up ther golde and faſt yſhet,
And ſore thereon ther hertis ſet:
Thei neithir lovin God ne drede;
Thei kepin more than it is nede,
And in ther baggis ſore it binde
Out of the ſunne and of the winde;
Thei puttin up more than nede wate
Whan thei ſene povir folk forſare,
For hungre die, and for cold quake;
God can well vengeaunce thereof take;

Digitized by Google

The grete miſchivis 'hem aſſaileth,
And thus in gadring aie travaileth;
With mochil pain thei winne richéſſe,
And drede 'hem holdith in diſtreſſe
To kepin that thei gathir faſt:
With ſorowe thei leve it at laſt,
With ſorowe thei bothe die and live
That unto richeſſe ther hertes yeve.
And in defaute of love it is,
As it ſhewith full well iwis,
For if theſe gredy, ſothe to ſaine,
Lovidin and were loved againe,
And gode love reignid ovir all,
Soche wickidneſſe ne ſhould yfall,
But he ſhould yeve that moſte gode had
To 'hem that weren in nede beſtad,
And live withoutin falſe uſure,
For charite full clene and pure;
If thei 'hem yeve unto godeneſſe,
Defending 'hem from idilneſſe,
In all this worlde than povir none
We ſhouldin finde I trowe not one.
But chaungid is this worlde unſtable,
For love is ovir all vendable:
We ſe that no man lovith now
But for his winning and for prowe;
And love is thrallid in ſervage
Whan it is ſolde for avauntage;

Digitized by Google

Yet women woll ther bodies sell:
Soche soules goith to the devill of hell.
Whan Love had tolde 'hem his entent
The baronage to counsaile went.
In many sentencis thei fill,
And diversly thei saied ther will,
But aftir discorde thei accorded,
And ther accorde to Love recorded:
Sir, saidin thei, we ben at one,
By even accorde of everichone,
Out take Richesse allonily,
That swornè hath full hauteinly
That she the castill n'ill assaile,
Ne smite a stroke in this battaile
With darte nè mace, ne spere nè knife,
For man that speketh or herith life,
And blamith your empriſe iwis,
And from our hoste departid is,
At lestè waie, as in this plite,
So hath she this man in dispite;
For she saieth he ne loved her never,
And therefore she woll hate him ever;
For he woll gathir no tresore
He hath her wrathe for evirmore;
He' agilte her nere in othir case,
Lo here all wholly his trespase!
She saieth well that this othir daie
He asked her leve to gone the waie

Digitized by Google

That is clepid to moche yeving,
And ſpake full faire in his praying,
But whan he praied her poore was he,
Therefore ſhe warned him the entre,
Ne yet is he not thrivin ſo
That he hath getten a penie or two
That quietly' is his owne in holde:
Thus hath Richeſſe us all ytolde,
And whan Richeſſe us this recorded
Withoutin her we ben acorded.
And we finde in our accordaunce
That Falſe Semblant and Abſtinaunce,
With all the folke of ther battaile,
Shull at the hindir gate aſſaile
That Wickid Tong hath in keping,
With his Normans full of jangling,
And with 'hem Curteſie and Largeſſe,
That ſhullin ſhewe ther hardineſſe
To the old wife that kept ſo hard
Faire Welcoming within her ward,
Than ſhall Delite and Well-Heling
Yfondin Shame adoun to bring
With all her hoſte-erly and late,
Thei ſhull aſſailin that ilke gate;
Ayeniſt Drede ſhall Hardineſſe
Aſſaile and alſo Sikirneſſe,
With all the folke of ther leding,
That nevir wiſte what was ſlaying.

Digitized by Google

Fraunchiſe ſhall fight and eke Pite
With Daungir full of cruilte.
Thus is your hoſte ordainid wele;
Doune ſhall the caſtill every dele
If evèriche doe his entent,
So that Venus ybe preſent,
Your mothir, full of veſſelage,
That can inough of ſoche uſage;
Withoutin her maie no wight ſpede
This werke neithir for worde ne dede,
Therefore is gode ye for her ſende,
For through her maie this worke amende.

Lordinges, my mothir the goddes,
That is my ladie and maiſtres,
Ne is nat all at my willing,
Ne doeth nat all my deſiring;
Yet can ſhe ſometime doen labour
Whan that her luſte in my ſocour,
As my nedè is for to atcheve,
But now I thinke her nat to greve:
My mothir is ſhe', and of childhede
I both worſhip her and eke drede,
For who that dredith ſire ne dame
Shall it abie in bodie' or name:
And nathèleſſe yet connè we
Sende aſtir her if nede ybe,

Digitized by Google

And were ſhe nigh ſhe commin wold;
I trowe that nothing might her hold.
My mothir is of grete proweſſe,
She hath tane many a fortreſſe
That coſt hath many' a pound er this
There I n'as not preſent iwis,
And yet men ſaied it was my dede:
But I come nevir in that ſtede,
Ne me ne liketh, ſo mote I the,
That ſoche tours ben ytake with me;
For why? me thinketh that in no wiſe
It maie be cleped but Marchaundiſe.

Go buie a tourſir blacke or white,
And paie therefore, than art thou quite:
The marchaunt owith the right nought
Ne thou him whan thou haſt it bought.
I woll not ſelling clepe Yeving,
For ſelling aſketh no guerdoning;
Here lithe no thanke ne no merite,
That one goth from that othre' all quite;
But this ſelling is not ſemblable;
For whan his horſe is in the ſtable
He maie it ſell again parde,
And winnen on it, ſoche happe maie be,
All maie the manne nat leſe iwis,
For at the leſt the ſkinne is his;

Digitized by Google

Or ellis, if it ſo betide
That he woll kepe his horſe to ride,
Yet is he lorde aie of his horſe;
But thilkè chafare is well worſe
There Venus entremetith ought,
For who ſo ſoche chaffare hath bought
He ſhall not worchin ſo wiſely
That he ne ſhall leſe uttirly
Bothe his money and his chaffare;
But the ſellir of thilkè ware
The priſe and profite havin ſhall;
Certaine the buier ſhall leſe all,
For he ne can ſo dere it buie
To have lordſhip and full maiſtrie,
Ne havin power to make letting
Neither for yefte ne for preching,
That of his chaffare maugre his
An other ſhall have as moche iwis,
If he woll yeve as moche as he,
Of what countrey ſo that he be,
Or for right nought, ſo happe ymaie,
If he can flattir her to' her paie.
And ben than ſoche marchauntis wiſe?
No, but folis in every wiſe:
Whan thei buie ſoche thing wilfully
There thei leſe ther gode folily;
But nathèleſſe this dare I ſaie,
My mothir is not wont to paie,

For ſhe' is neithir ſo fole ne nice
To entremete her of ſoche vice;
But truſtith well he ſhall paie all
That repente of his bargaine ſhall,
Whan Poverte' put him in diſtreſſe,
All were he ſcholir to Richeſſe,
That is for me in grete yerning
Whan ſhe aſſenteth to my willing.

But by my mothir Sainct Venus,
And by her fathir Saturnus,
That her engendrid by his life,
But nat upon his weddid wife,
Yet woll I more unto you ſwere,
To makin this thing the ſurere.
Now by that faithe and that beaute
That I owe to' all my brethrin fre,
Of whiche there n'is wight undir heven
That can ther fadir's namis neven,
So divers and many there be
That with my mothre' have be prive,
Yet woll I ſwere for ſikirneſſe
The pole of helle to my witneſſe,
Now drinke I not this yere clarre
If that I lie or forſworne be,
For of the goddes the uſage is
That who ſo him forſwereth amis

Digitized by Google

Shall that yere drinkin no clarre.
Now have I ſworne inough parde;
If I forſwere than am I lorne;
But I woll nevir be forſworne,
Sithe Richeſſe hath me failid here
She ſhall abie that treſpas dere
At leſtè waie but I her harme
With ſwerde, or ſparth, or with gifarme.
For certis ſithe ſhe loveth not me,
Fro thilkè time that ſhe maie ſe
The caſtill and the toure to ſhake,
In ſorie time ſhe ſhall awake;
If I maie gripe a richè man
I ſhall ſo pulle him if I can
That he ſhall in a few ſtoundis
Leſe all his markes and his poundis.
I ſhall him make his pens out fling
But that thei in his garnir ſpring;
Our maidins ſhall eke plucke him ſo
That him ſhall nedin fethirs mo,
And make him ſell his londe to ſpende
But he the bet conne him defende.

Pore men han made ther lordes of me;
Although thei nat ſo mightie be
That thei maie ſede me in delite
I woll not have 'hem in diſpite:

Digitized by Google

No gode man hateth 'hem as I geſſe,
For chinche and feloun is Richeſſe,
That ſo can chaſe 'hem and diſpiſe,
And 'hem defoule in ſondrie wiſe:
Thei loven full bette, ſo God me ſpede,
Than doith the riche chinchy grede,
And ben (in gode faith) more ſtable,
And truir and more ſerviable,
And therefore it ſuffiſith me
Ther gode hertis and ther beaute:
Thei han on me ſet all ther thought,
And therefore I foryete 'hem nought.
I woll 'hem bring in grete nobleſſe,
If that I were god of Richeſſe,
As I am god of Love ſothely,
Soche ruthe upon ther plaint have I;
Therefore I muſt his ſuccour be
That painith him to ſervin me,
For if he deied for love of this
Than ſemeth in me no love there is.
Sir, ſaied thei, ſothe is every dele
That ye reherce, and we wote wele
Thilke othe to holde is reſonable,
For it is gode and covenable
That ye on riche men han yſworne;
For, Sir, this wote we well beforne,
If riche men doin you homage
That is as folis doen outrage;

Digitized by Google

But ye ſhull not forſworne ybe,
Ne let therefore to drinke clarrie,
Or piment makid freſhe and newe;
Ladies ſhull 'hem ſoche pepir brewe
If that thei fall into ther laas
That thei for wo mowe ſaine Alas!
Ladies ſhullen ere ſo curteis be
That thei ſhall quite your othe all fre;
Ne ſeketh nevir othir vicaire,
For thei ſhall ſpeke with 'hem ſo faire
That ye ſhall holde yóu paied full wele,
Though ye you medle nere a dele.
Let ladies worchin with ther thinges,
Thei ſhall 'hem tell ſo fele tidinges,
And move ſo many requeſtis,
By flatterie, that not honeſt is,
And thereto yeve 'hem ſoche thankinges,
What with kiſſing and with talkinges,
That certis if thei trowid be
Shall nevir leve 'hem londe ne fe
That it n'ill as the moeble fare,
Of whiche thei firſt delivered are.
Now maie you tell us all your will,
And we your heſtis ſhall fulfill.

But Falſe Semblant dare not for drede
Of you, Sir, medle' him of this dede,

For he ſaith that ye ben his ſo,
He n'ot if ye woll worche him wo;
Wherefore we praie you all, beau Sire,
That ye foryeve him now your ire,
And that he maie dwell as your man
With Abſtinence his dere lemman:
This our accorde and our will now.
Parfei, ſaied Love, I graunt it you
I woll well holde him for my man;
Now let him come: and he forthe ran.
Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) in this wife
I take the here to my ſervice,
That thou our frendis helpe alwaie,
And hindre 'hem nelthir night ne daie,
But doe thy might 'hem to releve,
And eke our en'emies that thou greve:
Thine be this might; I graunt it the;
My king of Harlotes ſhalt thou be:
We woll that thou have ſoche honour:
Certain thou art a falſe traitour,
And eke a thief; ſithe thou were borne
A thouſande times thou art forſworne:
But nathèleſſe in our hering,
To put our folke out of doubting,
I bidde the teche 'hem, woſt thou how?
By ſome genèrall ſignè now,
In what place thou ſhalt foundin be
If that men had miſtir of the,

Digitized by Google

And how men ſhall the beſt eſpie,
For the to knowe is grete maiſtrie:
Tell in what place is thine haunting.
Sir, I have fully divers wonning
That I kepe not reherſid be,
So that ye would reſpitin me,
For if that I tell you the ſothe
I maie have harme and ſhamè bothe:
If that my felowes wiſtin it
My talis ſhouldin me be quit,
For certaine thei would hatè me
If er I knewe ther cruelte,
For thei would ore all hold 'hem ſtill
Of trothe that is again ther will:
Soche talis kepin thei not here;
I might eſtſone buie it full dere
If I ſaied of 'hem any thing
That diſpleſith to ther hering,
For what worde that 'hem pricketh or biteth
In that worde none of 'hem deliteth,
All were it goſpell the' Evangile,
That would reprove 'hem of ther gile,
For thei are cruill and hautain;
And this thing wote I well certain,
If I ſpeke ought to paire or loos
Your courte ſhall not ſo well be cloos
That thei ne ſhall wite it at laſt:
Of gode men am I nought agaſt,

Digitized by Google

For thei woll taken on 'hem nothing
Whan that thei knowe all my meaning,
But he that woll it on him take
He woll himself suspecious make
That he his life let cowirtly
In Gile and in Ypocrisie,
That me' engendrid and yave fostring.
Thei made a full gode engendring,
(Quod Love) for who so sothly tell
Thei engendrid the divell of hell.
But nedely, howsoere it be,
(Quod Love) I will and charge the
To tell anon thy wonning placis
Hering eche wight that in this place is,
And what life thou liviſt also,
Hide it no lengir now; whereto?
Thou muſt discovre' all thy worching,
How thou serviſt, and of what thing,
Though that thou shouldeſt for thy soth-saw
Ben all to-betin and to-drawe,
And yet art thou not wont parde;
But natheleſſe though thou betin be
Thou shalt not be the firſt that so.
Hath for sothsawe ysuffrid wo.
Sir, sithe that it maie likin you,
Though that I should be slain right now,
I shall doen your commaundèment,
For thereto have I grete talent.

Digitized by Google

Withoutin wordis mo right than
Falſe Semblant his ſermon began,
And ſaied 'hem thus in audience:
Barons, take hede of my ſentence.
That wight that liſt to have knowing
Of Falſe Semblant, full of flatt'ring,
He muſt in worldly folke him ſeke,
And certis in the cloiſtirs eke;
I won no where but in 'hem twaie;
But not like evin, ſothe to ſaie:
Shortly, I woll herberowe mé
There I hope beſt to hulſtrid be;
And certainly ſikereſt hiding
Is undirneth humbliſt clothing.
Religious folke ben full covert,
Seculer folke ben more appert;
But nathèleſſe I woll not blame
Religious folke, ne 'hem diffame,
In what habite that er thei go;
Religion humble' and true alſo
Woll I not blamin ne diſpiſe,
But I n'ill love it in no wiſe;
I mene of falſe religious,
That ſtout ben and malicious,
That wollin in an habite go
And ſettin not ther herte therto.

Religious folke ben all pitous,
Thou ſhalt not ſene one diſpitous;

Digitized by Google

Thei lovin no pride ne no ſtrife,
But humbly thei woll lede ther life,
With whiche folke woll I nevir be,
And if I dwell I fainè me
I maie well in ther habite go;
But me were lever my necke a two
Than let a purpoſe that I take,
What covènaunt that er I make.
I dwell with 'hem that proude ybe,
And full of wiles and ſubtilte,
That worſhip of this worlde coveiten,
And gretè nede connin expleiten,
And gon and gadrin grete pitaunces,
And purchaſe 'hem the acqueintaunces
Of men that mightie life maie leden,
And faine 'hem pore, and 'hem ſelf feden
With gode morcils delicious,
And drinkin gode wine precious,
And preche us povert and diſtreſſe,
And fiſhin 'hem ſelf grete richeſſe
With wily nettis that thei caſt:
It woll come foule out at the laſt.
Thei ben fro clene religion went;
Thei make the worlde an argument
That hath a foule concluſion:
I have a robe of religion,
Than am I all religious:
This argument is all roignous;

Digitized by Google

It is not worth a crokid brere:
Habite ne makith monke ne frere,
But clene life and devocion
Makith gode men of religion.
Nathèleſſe there can none anſwere,
How high that en his hedde he ſhere
With raſour whettid nere ſo kene,
That gile in braunchis cutte thurtene,
There can no wight diſtinct it ſo
That he dare ſaie a word thereto.
But what herb'row that ere I take,
Or what ſemblaunt that er I make,
I mene but gile, and folowe that,
For right no more than Gibbe our cat
(That awaiteth mice and rattes to killen)
Ne entende I but to begilen:
Ne no wight maie by my clothing
Wete with what folke is my dwelling,
Ne by my wordis yet parde,
So ſoft and ſo pleſaunt thei be.
Beholde the dedis that I doe,
But thou be blinde thou oughtiſt ſo,
For varie ther wordes fro ther dede
Thei thinke on gile withoutin drede,
What manir clothing that thei were,
Or what eſtate that er thei bere,
Lerid or leude, lorde or ladie,
Knight, ſquier, burgeis, or bailie.

Digitized by Google

Right thus while Falſe Semblant ſermoneth
Eſt ſonis Love him areſoneth,
And brake his tale in his ſpeking
As though he had him tolde leſing,
And ſaid, What devill is that I here?
What folke haſt thou us nempnid here?
Maie men findin religioun
In worldly habitacioun?
Ye, Sir, it foloweth nat that thei
Should lede a wickid life parfei,
Ne not therefore ther ſoulis leſe
That 'hem to worldly clothis cheſe,
For certis it were grete pite;
Men maie in ſeculer clothes ſe
Floriſhin holy religionn
Full many' a ſainct in felde and toun,
With many' a virgine glorious,
Devoute and full religious,
Han died that commin clothe aie beren,
Yet ſainctis nertheleſſe thei weren:
I could reckin you many a ten,
Ye, welnigh all theſe holy women
That men in churchis herry' and ſeke,
Bothe maidins and theſe wivis eke,
That bare ful many' a faire childe here,
Werid alway clothis ſeculere,
And in the ſame clothes didin they
That ſaintis weren and ben alway.

Digitized by Google

The ix thousande maidinis dere,
That beren in heven ther ciergis clere,
Of whiche men rede in churche and sing,
Were take in secu\er clothing,
Whan thei recevid martirdome,
And wonnin heven unto ther home.
Gode hert ymakith the gode thought,
The clothing yeveth ne revith nought:
The gode thought and the gode worching
That maketh the religion flouring;
There lieth the gode religioun
Aftir the righte entencioun.
Who so ytoke a wethir's skinne,
And wrapped a gredy woulfe therinne,
For he should go with lambis white,
Wenist thou not he would 'hem bite?
Yes; nertheleſſe as he were wode
He would 'hem wirry', and drinke the blode,
And wel the rathir 'hem diſceve,
For sithin thei coude nat perceve
His tregette and his cruilte
Thei would him folow tho he flie.

If there be wolvis of ſuche hewe
Amongis theſe apoſtlis newe,
Thou, holy churche, thou maiſte be wailed;
Sithe that thy cite is aſſailed

Through knightis of thine ownè table
God wot thy lordſhip is doutable:
If thei enforcin it to win
That ſhould defend it fro within
Who might defence ayenſt 'hem make?
Withoutin ſtroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonell,
Without diſplaying of penſell;
And if God n'il done it ſocour,
But let rennin in this colour,
Thou muſt thy heſtis lettin be;
Than is there nought but yeldè the,
Or yeve 'hem tribute doutileſs,
And holde it of 'hem to have pees:
But gretir harme betidith the
That thei all maiſtir of it be;
Wel con thei ſcornin the withall,
By day yſtuffin thei the wall,
And al the night thei minin there:
Nay, thou plantin muſt ellis where
Thine impis if thou wolt frute have;
Abide not there thy ſelfe to ſave.

But now pece; here I turne againe;
I wol no more of this thing ſaine,
Yf I may paſſin me hereby,
For I might makin you wery;

Digitized by Google

But I wol hetin you alway
To helpe your frendis what I may,
So thei wollin my company,
For thei be ſhent all uttirly;
But if ſo fallin that I be
Oftin with 'hem and thei with me,
And eke my lemman mote thei ſerve,
Or thei ſhul not my love deſerve.
Forſoth I am a falſe traitour;
God judged me for a theſe trechour:
Forſworne I am, but wel nigh none
Wote of my gile til it be done.
Through me hath many' one deth receved
That my treget ner aperceved,
And yet receveth, and ſhal receve,
That my falſneſſe ſhal nere perceve,
But who ſo doth, if he wiſe be,
Him is right gode beware of me;
But ſo ſlighe is the perceving
That al to late comith knowing,
For Proteus, that coude him chaunge
In every ſhappe homely and ſtraunge,
Coude nevir ſuche gile ne treſoune
As I, for I come nere in toune
There as I might yknowin be
Though men me both might here and ſee:
Ful wel I can my clothis chaunge,
Take one and make an othir ſtraunge;

Digitized by Google

Now am I knight, now chaſtèlaine,
Now prelate, and nowe chapèlaine,
Now prieſt, now clerke, and now foſtere,
Now am I maiſtir, now ſcholere,
Now monke, now chanon, now baily:
Whatevir miſtir manne am I.
  Now am I prince, now am I page,
And can by hert ev'ry langage;
Somtimis am I hore and olde,
Now I am yong, and ſtout, and bolde,
Now am I Robert, now Robin,
Now Frere Minor, now Jacobin:
And with me foloweth my loteby
To done me ſolace and comp'any,
That hight Dame Abſtinence, and raigned
In many a queint arraie fained;
Right as it commeth to her liking
I fulfill all her deſiring.
  Somtime a woman's clothe take I,
Now am I a maide, now lady:
  Somtime I am religious,
Now like an ankir in an hous:
  Somtime am I a prioreſſe,
And now a nonne, and now abbeſſe,
And go thorough all regiounes
Yſeking all religiounes.
  But to what ordir that I' am ſworne
I take the ſtrawe and bete the corne:

Digitized by Google

To jolie folke I enhabite
I aſke no more but ther habite.
What wol ye more? in every wiſe
Right as me liſt I me diſgiſe.
Wel can I bere me undir wede,
Unlike is my worde to my dede.
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The folke through my priv'ilegis all
That ben in Chriſtendome a live.
I may aſſoile and I may ſhrive,
That no prelate may lettin me,
All folke where evir thei found be:
I n'ot no prelate maie done ſo
But it the Pope be, and no mo,
That madin thilke eſtabliſhing:
Now is not this a propre thing?
But were my ſleightis aperceved
. . . . . .
As I was wont, and woſt thou why?
For I did 'hem a tregetry;
But therof yeve I' a litil tale,
I have the ſilvir and the male.
So have I prechid and eke ſhriven,
So have I take, ſo have I yeven,
Through ther foly huſbonde and wife,
That I lede right a joly life:
Through ſimpleſſe of the prelacie
Thei know not all my tregettrie.

Digitized by Google

But for as moche as man and wife
Shuld ſhew ther pariſh prieſt ther life
Onis a yere, as ſaith the boke,
Er any wight his houſil toke,
Than have I privilegis large
That maie of mochil thing diſcharge,
For he may ſay right thus parde:
Sir Prieſt, in ſhrift I tel it the
That he to whom that I am ſhriven
Hath me aſſoilid, and me yeven
Penaunce ſothly for alle my ſin
Whiche that I founde me giltie in;
Ne I ne' have nevir entencion
To make double confeſſion,
Ne rehercę eſte my ſhrift to the;
O ſhrifte is right inough to me;
This ought the to ſuffiſin wele,
Ne be not rebell nere a dele,
For certis though thou haddeſt it ſworne
I wote no prieſt ne prelate borne
That maie to ſhrift eft me conſtraine,
And if thei done I wol me plaine,
For I wote where to plainin wele:
Thou ſhalt not ſtreinin me a dele,
Ne enforce me ne not me trouble
To makin my confeſſion double:

Ne I have none affection
To' have double abſolucion;
The firſt is right inough to me;
This lattre' aſſoiling quite I the:
I am unbounde; what maiſt thou finde
More of my ſinnes me to unbinde,
For he that might hath in his honde
Of all my ſinnis me unbounde?
And if thou wolt me thus conſtraine,
That me mote nedis on the plaine,
There ſhall no juge imperiall,
Ne biſhop ne officiall,
Done jugèment on me, for I
Shal gone and plaine me opinly
Anon to my ſhriftfathir newe,
Whiche that hight Frerè Wolfé untrewe,
And he ſhal chuſin him for me,
For I trowe he can hampir thé;
But Lord! he would be wrothe withall
Yf men would him Frere Wolfe ycall,
For he would have no pacience,
But done all cruill vengience;
He would his might done at the leſt,
Than nothing ſpare for Godd'is heſt:
And God ſo wiſe be my ſocour
But thou yeve me my Saviour
At Eſtir, whan it likith me,
Withoutin preſing more on the,

Digitized by Google

I wol forth and to him ygone,
And he ſhal houſil me anone,
For I am out of thy grutching;
I kepe not dele with the nothing.
Thus may he ſhrive him that forſaketh
His pariſh prieſt and to me taketh,
And if the prieſt wol him refuſe
I am full redy him to' accuſe,
And him puniſh and hampir ſo
That he his churchè ſhal forgo.
But who ſo hath in his feling
The conſequence of ſuche ſhriving
Shal ſene that prieſt maie nere have might
To know the conſcience aright
Of him that is undir his cure;
And this is ayenſt holy' ſcripture,
That biddith every herde honeſt
Have very knowing of his beſt;
But povir folke, that gon by ſtrete,
That have no golde ne ſummis grete,
Them would I let to ther prelates,
Or let ther prieſtis know ther ſtates,
For to me right nought yevin thei,
And why it is, for thei ne may.
Thei ben ſo bare I take no kepe,
But I woll havin the fat ſhepe;
Let pariſh prieſtis have the lene;
I yeve not of ther harme a bene;

Digitized by Google

And if that prelatis grutche it,
That oughtin wroth be in ther wit
To lesin ther fat bestis so,
I shal yeve 'hem a stroke or two,
So that thei shal lesin with force
Ye, both ther mitre and ther croce.
Thus jape I 'hem, and have do longe;
My privilegis ben so strong.
False Semblant would have stintid here,
But Love ne made him no suche chere
That he was wery of his sawe,
But for to make him glad and fawe
He said, Tell on more specially
How that thou servist untruly:
Tel forth, and shame the nere a dele,
For as thine habit shewith wele
Thou serves an holy herèmite.
Sothe is but I' am but an ipocrite.
Thou goest and prechist poverte.
Ye, Sir, but Richesse hath postè.
Thou prechist abstinence also.
Sir, I woll fillen, so mote I go,
My paunche of gode mete and gode wine,
As should a maistir of divine,
For how that I me povir faine
Yet al povir folke I disdaine.

Digitized by Google

I love bettir the acqueintaunce
Ten timis of the King of Fraunce
Than of a pore man of milde mode
Though that his ſoule be all ſo gode,
For whan I ſe beggirs quaking,
Nakid on mixins all ſtinking,
For hungre crie and eke for care,
I entremet not of ther fare;
Thei ben ſo pore and ful of pine
Thei might not ones yeve me a dine,
For thei have nothing but ther life;
What ſhould he yeve that licketh his knife?
It is but foly to' entremete
To ſeke in hound'is neſt fat mete:
Let here him to the ſpittle' anone,
But for me comfort get thei none:
But a full riche ſicke uſurere
Would I viſitin and drawe nere;
Him would I comforte and rehete,
For I hope of his golde to gete,
And if that wickid Deth him have
I woll go with him in his grave:
And if there any reprove me
Why that I let the povir be,
Woſt thou how I know how to' aſcape?
I ſay and ſwerin him full rape

Digitized by Google

That richè men han more tetchis
Of ſinne than han theſe pore wretchis,
And han of counſaile more miſtere,
And therfore I would drawe 'hem nere:
But as gret hurt, it maie ſo be,
Hath ſoule in right grete poverte
As ſoule in grete richeſſe forſothe,
Al be it that thei hurtin bothe,
For richeſſe and mendicitees
Bene clepid two extrèmitees;
The mene is clepid Suffiſaunce,
There lieth of vertue the' aboundaunce.
For Salomon, full wel I wote,
In his wiſe Parablis us wrote,
As it is knowen of many' a wight,
In his thirtieth chapitir right,
God thou me kepe for thy poſtè
Fro richeſſe and mendicite,
For if a richè man him dreſſe
To thinkin to moche on richeſſe
His hert on that ſo ferre is ſette
That he' his Creatour doth foryette,
And him that beggith woll aie greve;
How ſhould I by his worde him leve,
Unneth that he n'is a micher
Forſworne, or els Godd'is lier?
Thus ſayith Salomon'is ſawes:
Ne we find writtin in no lawes,

Digitized by Google

And namely in our Christin laie,
Who so saith ye I dare say naie,
That Christ ne his apostils dere,
While that thei walkid in erth here,
Were nevir sene herbrid begging,
For they n'olde beggin for nothing.
And right thus were men wont to teche,
And in this wise wouldin it preche
The maistirs of divinite
Somtime in Paris the cite.

And if men would there gaine appose
The nakid texte and let the glose,
It mightin sone assoilid be,
For men may wel the sothe yse
That pardie thei might aske a thing
Plainly forth withoutin begging,
For they weren Godd'is herdis dere,
And cure of soulis haddin here,
Thei ne wolde nothing begge ther fode,
For aftir Christ was done on rode
With ther propir hondis thei wrought,
And with traveile, and ellis nought,
Thei wonnin al ther sustinaunce,
And lividin forth in ther penaunce,
And the remenaunt yaf awaie
To othir pore folkis alwaie.

Thei neithir bildin toure ne hall,
But thei in houſis ſmal with alle.
A mighty man, that can and maie,
Should with his honde and body' alwaie
Winne him his fode in labouring,
Yf he ne' have rent or ſuche a thing:
Although he be religious,
And God to ſervin curiqus,
Thus mote he done or do treſpas,
But if it be in certaine caas,
That I can telle if miſtir be
Right wel whan that the time I ſe.
Seke the boke of Saincte Auguſtine,
Be it in papir or perchemene,
There as he writte of theſe worchinges,
Thou ſhalt ſene that none excuſinges
A perfite man ne ſhould yſeke
By wordis ne by dedis eke,
Although he be religious
And God to ſervin curious,
That he ne ſhal, ſo mote I go,
With propir hondes and body' alſo
Yget his fode in laboring,
Yf he ne' have properte of thing,
Yet ſhould he ſel all his ſubſtaunce,
And with his ſwinke have ſuſtinaunce,
If he be parfite in bounte;
Thus han the bokis toldè me:

For he that wol gone idilly,
And uſith it aie beſily
To hauntin othir menn'is table,
He is a trechour full of fable,
Ne he ne maie by gode reſon
Excuſe him by his oriſon,
For men behovith in ſome giſe
Ben ſomtime out of God's ſerviſe,
To gon and purchaſin ther nede.
Men mote etin, that is no drede,
And ſlepe, and eke do othir thing,
And ſo long may thei leve praying.
So may they eke ther praiere blinne
While that thei werke ther mete to winne;
Seint Auſtin wol therto accorde
In thilkè boke that I recorde.
Juſtinian eke, that made lawes,
Hath thus forbodin by olde ſawes.
No man, up paine for to be ded,
Mighty' of body, to begge his bred
Yf he may ſwinke it for to gete;
Men ſhould him rathir maime or bete,
Or done of him aperte juſtice,
Than ſuffrin him in ſuche malice.
Thei done not wel, ſo mote I go,
Whiche that takin ſuche almeſſe ſo,
But if thei have ſome privilege
That of the paine 'hem woll alege.

Digitized by Google

But how that is can I not ſe
But if the prince diſcevid be;
Ne I ne wene not ſikirly
That thei maie have it rightfully.
But yet I wol not determine
Of princis powir ne define,
Ne by my worde compre'hende iwis,
Yf it ſo ferre may ſtretche in this;
I wol not entremete a dele
But I trowe that the boke ſaith wele,
Who that taketh almeſſis that be
Dewe to folke that men may yſe
Lame and feble, wery and bare,
Povir, or in ſuche manir care,
That con winnin 'hem nevir mo,
For thei havin no power therto,
He etith his ownè dampning,
But if he lie that madé al thing;
And if ye ſuche a truaunt finde
Chaſtiſe him wel if ye be kinde;
But thei would hatin you parcaas
If that ye fillin in ther laas.
Thei would eftſonis do you ſcathe,
If that thei mightin, late or rathe,
For thei be not ful pacient
That han the worlde thus foule yblent:
And wetith wel that God ybad
The gode man ſell al that he had

And folowe' him, and to pore it yeve;
He would not therfore that he live
To ſervin him in mendience,
For it was nevir his ſentence,
But he bad werke whan that nede is,
And folowe him in gode dedis.
Saint Poule, that loved al holy church,
He bade the' apoſtils for to wurch,
And winne ther livelode in that wiſe,
And 'hem defendid truandiſe,
And ſayid, Werkith with your honden:
Thus ſhould the thing be underſtonden.
He n'olde iwis have bid 'hem begging,
Ne ſellin goſpell ne preching,
Leſt thei berafte with ther aſking
Folke of ther cattle' or of ther thing.
For in this world is many' a man
That yeveth his gode, for he ne can
Werne it for ſhame, or ellis he
Would of the' aſkir delivered be,
And for he him encombrith ſo
He yeveth him gode to let him go:
But it can him nothing profite;
Thei leſe the yeſte and the merite.
The gode folke that St. Poule to preched
Profrid him oſte, whan he 'hem teched,
Some of ther gode in charite,
But therof right nothing toke he,

But of his hondis would he gette
Clothis to wrine him, and his mete.

Tel me than how a man may liven
That al his gode to pore hath yeven,
And wol but onely bidde his bedes,
And ner with hondes labour his nedes.
May he do so? Ye, Sir. And howe?
Sir, I woll gladly tellin you.
Saint Auſtin ſaith, A man may be
In houſis that han properte,
As Templers and Hoſpitèlers,
And as theſe Chanons Regulers,
Or theſe White Monkis, or theſe Blake,
I wol no mo enſamplis make,
And take thereof his ſuſteining,
For therin lyith no begging,
But othirwayis not iwis,
Yet Auſtin gabbith not of this;
And yet ful many' a monke laboureth
That God in holy churche honoureth,
For whan ther ſwinking is agon
Thei rede and ſing in church anone.
And for there hath ben grete diſcorde
As many' a wight may bere recorde,
Upon the' eſtate of mendicience,
I wol ſhortely in your preſence

Tel how a man maie begge at nede,
That hath not wherwith him to fede;
Maugre his felowis janglinges,
For fothfaſtnes wol none hidinges,
And yet percaſe I may obey,
That I to you fothly thus ſey.

Lo, here the caſe eſpeciall:
If a man be ſo beſtiall
That he of no craſte hath ſcience,
And nought deſirith ignorence,
Than may he go a begging yerne
Till he ſome othir craſte can lerne,
Through whiche withoutin truanding
He may in trouthe have his living:
Or if he may done no labour
For elde, or ſickeneſſe, or langour,
Or for his tendir age alſo,
Than may he yet a begging go:
Or if he have peravinture
Through uſage of his noriture
Livid ovir delicioufly,
Than oughtin gode folke cominly
Han of his miſchefe ſome pite,
And ſuffrin him alſo that he
May gon about and begge his bred
That he be not for hongir ded:

Digitized by Google

Or if he have of craftè conning,
And ſtrength alſo and deſiring
For to worchin as he had what,
But he finde neithir this ne that,
Than may he beggin till that he
Have gettin his neceſſitè:
Or if his winning be ſo lite
That his labour will not aquite
Sufficiauntly al his living
Yet may he go his prede begging,
Fro dore to dore he may go trace
Till he the remnaunt may purchaſe:
Or if a man would undirtake
Any empriſe for to ymake
In the reſcous of our lay,
And it defendin as he may,
Be it with armis or letture,
Or othir convenable cure,
If it be ſo that he pore be
Than may he beggin til that he
Maie findin in trouth for to ſwinke,
And get him clothis, mete, and drinke,
Swinke he with his hondes corporel,
And not with hondes eſpirituel.

In all this caſe, and in ſemblables,
If that there ben mo reſonables,

He maie begge as I tell you here,
And ellis not in no manere,
As William Saint Amour would preche,
And oftin would dispute and teche
Of this matir all openly
At Paris fully' and solemply;
And all so God my soulè blesse
As he had in this stedfastnesse
The' acorde of the' Universite,
And of the peple', as semith me.
No gode man ought it to refuse,
Ne ought him thereof to excuse,
Be wrothe or blithe, who so thou be,
For I wol speke and tell it the
Al should I die and be put doun,
As was Saint Poule, in derke prisoun,
Or be exilid in this caas
With wrong, as Maistir William was,
That my mothir Hypocrisie
Banished for her gret envie.
My mothir flemed him Saint Amour;
This noble man did suche labour
To susteine er the loialte,
That he to muche agiltè me:
He made a boke and let it write,
Wherin his life he did all dite,
And would that eche renied begging,
And livin by my travelling,

Digitized by Google

If I ne' had rent ne othir gode;
What! wenith he that I were wode?
For labour might me nevir plese,
I have more will to ben at ese,
And have well levir, sothe to saie,
Before the peple pattre' and praie,
And wrie me in my foxerie
Undir a cope of papelardie.
(Quod Love) What divel is this I here?
What wordis tellist thou me here?
What, Sir? Why Falseneſſe that apert is.
Than dredist thou not God? No, certis;
For selde in grete thing shal he spede
In this world that God wol ydrede,
For folke that 'hem to vertue yeven,
And truily on ther owne liven,
And 'hem in godeneſſe aie contente,
On 'hem is litil thrifte isente:
Suche folke ydrinkin grete misese;
That life ne may me nevir plese.
But se what golde han uſerers,
And silvir eke, in ther garners!
Tailagiers, and these moniours,
Bailiffes, bedils, provostes, countours,
These livin well nigh by ravine;
The smale peple 'hem mote encline,
And thei as wolvis wol 'hem eten;
Upon the povir folke thei geten

Digitized by Google

Ful muche of that thei ſpende or kepe;
N'is none of 'hem that thei n'il ſtrepe,
And wrine 'hem ſelvin well at full;
Withoutin ſcalding thei 'hem pull:
The ſtrong the feble ovirgothe,
But I that were my ſimple clothe
Robbe bothe the robbid and robbours,
And gile the gilid and gilours;
By my treget I gathre' and threſte
The grete treſour into my cheſte,
That lieth with me ſo faſte ybounde;
Thus myn high paleis do I founde,
And my delitis I fulfill
With wine at feſtis at my will,
And tablis ful of entremees:
I wol no life but eſe and pees,
And winnin golde to ſpende alſo,
For whan the grete bagge is ago
It comith full right with my japes,
Make I not wel tomble mine apes?
'To winnen is alwaie mine entent;
My purchace' is bettir than my rent;
For though that I ſhould betin be
Ovir al I entremet me:
Withoutin me maie no wight dure;
I walkin foulis for to cure:
Of all the world the cure have I
In brede and eke in length; boldly

Digitized by Google

I wol bothe preche and eke counſaile:
With hondis wol I not travailen,
For of the Pope I have the bull;
I ne holde not my wittis dull:
I wol not ſtintin in my live
Theſe emperouris for to ſhrive,
Or kingis, dukes, and lordis grete,
But povir folke al quite I lete:
I love no ſuche ſhriving parde
But it for othir cauſe ybe:
Irecke not of theſe povir men;
Ther eſtate is not worthe an hen.
Wher findeſt thou 'a ſwinkir of labour
Have me to be his confeſſoure?
But empreſſis and ducheſſis,
Theſe quenis and eke counteſſis,
Theſe abbeſſis and eke bigins,
And theſe grete ladies palaſins,
Theſe joly knightis and bailives,
Theſe nonnis and theſe burgeis wives,
That riche yben and eke pleſing,
And theſe maidinis welfaring,
Where ſo thei clad or nakid be,
Uncounſailed goeth there none fro me;
And for ther ſoulis ſavite
At lorde and lady', and ther meine,
I aſke, whan thei 'hem to me ſhrive,
The propertie of al ther live,

Digitized by Google

And make 'hem troiwe, both moste and leſt,
Ther pariſh prieſt is but a beſt
Ayens me and my company,
That ſhrewis ben as gret as I,
Fro whiche I wot not hide in holde
No privite that me is tolde,
That I by worde or ſigne iwis
Ne wol make 'hem know what it is,
And thei wollen alſo tellin me
Thei hele fro me no privite;
And for to make you them perceiven
That uſin folke thus to deceiven,
I wol you ſaine withoutin drede
What men maie in the Goſpell rede
Of Sainct Mathewe the goſpellere,
That ſaieth as I ſhall you ſaie here.

Upon the chairè of Moſes
Thus it is gloſid doutileſs,
(That is, The Oldè Teſtament,
For thereby is the chairè ment)
Sittin Scribis and Phariſen,
That is to ſaine, the curſid men,
Whiche that we Ipocritis call;
Doeth that thei preche I rede you all;
But doeth not as thei doen a dele
That ben not werie to ſaie wele,

Digitized by Google

But to doe well no will have thei,
And thei would binde on folke alwaie,
That ben to be begilid able,
Burdons that ben importable;
On folkis ſhouldirs thingis thei couchen,
That thei n'ill with ther fingirs touchen;
And why woll thei not touch it? why!
For them ne liſte nat ſikirly,
For the ſadde burdons that men taken
Ymakin folkis ſhouldirs aken.
And if thei doe ought that godè be
That is for folke it ſhouldin ſe;
Ther burdons largir makin thei,
And makin ther hemmes wide alwaie,
And lovin ſetis at the table
The firſt and the moſte honourable;
And for to han the firſt chairis
In ſinagogges to 'hem full dere is,
And willen that folke 'hem loute and grete
Whan that thei paſſin through the ſtrete,
And wollen be cleped Maiſtir alſo;
But thei ne ſhould not willin ſo,
The Goſpell' is there ayenſt I geſſe,
That ſhewith well ther wickidneſſe.

An othir cuſtome uſin we;
Of 'hem that woll ayenſt us be
We hate him dedly everychone,
And we woll werrey him as one:

Digitized by Google

Him that one hatith hate we all,
And conjecte how to doen him fall;
And if we ſene him winne honour,
Richeſſe or preiſe, through his valour,
Provende or rent, or dignite,
Full faſte iwis compaſſin we
By what laddre' he is clombin ſo;
And for to make him doune to go
With traiſon we woll him defame,
And doen him leſin his gode name.
Thus from his laddir we him take,
And thus his frendis foes we make,
But worde ne wetin ſhall he none
Till al his frendis ben his fone;
For if we did it opinly
We mightin have blame redily,
For had he wiſte of our malice
He had him kept but he were nice.
An othir' is this, that if ſo fall
That there be one emong us all
That doeth a gode tourne, out of drede
We ſaine it is our aldir dede,
Ye, ſikirly though he it fained,
Or that him liſte or that him dained
A man through him avaunced be,
Thereof all partineres be we,
And tellin folke where ſo we go
That man through us is ſprongin ſo.

Digitized by Google

And for to have of men praising
We purchace through our flattering
Of richè men of grete poſſe
Lettirs to witneſſe our bounte,
So that man weneth that maie us ſe
That allè vertue in us be.
And alwaie povir we us fain,
But how ſo that we hegge or plain
We ben the folke without leſing,
That all thing have without having.
Thus be dradde of the peple' iwis,
And gladly my purpoſe is this:
I delin with no wight but he
Have golde and treſour grete plente;
Ther acquaintaunce well lovin I:
This moche is my deſire ſhortly;
I entremete me of brocages,
I makin pece and mariages,
I am gladly executour,
And many times a procuratour,
I am ſometime a meſſagere,
That fallith not to my miſtere.
And many timis I make enqueſt,
For me that office is nat heneſt;
To dele with othir mennis thing
That is to me a grete liking;
And if that ye have ought to doe
In place that I repairin to

I ſhall it ſpedin through my witte
As ſone as ye have told me it:
So that ye ſervin me to paie
My ſervice ſhall be yours alwaie.
But who ſo woll chaſtiſè me
Anone my love yloſte hath he,
For I love no man in no giſe
That woll me reprove nor chaſtiſe,
But I woll all folke undirtake,
And of no wight no teching take;
For I that othir folke chaſtie
Woll not be taught fro my folie.

I ne love none hermitage more;
Ad deſertis and holtis hore,
And grete wodis everichone
I let 'hem to the Baptiſt John;
I queth him quite, and him releſſe,
Of Egypt all the wildirneſſe:
To ferre were all my manſiouns
Fro allè citees and gode touns.
My paleis and mine houſe make I
There men maie renne in opinly,
And ſaie that I the worlde forſake;
But all amidde I builde and make
My houſe, and ſwimme and plaie therein
Bette than a fiſhe doth with his finne.

Digitized by Google

Of Antichriſt'is men am I
Of whiche that Chriſt ſaieth opinly
Thei have habite of holineſſe,
And livin in ſoche wickidneſſe.
All outward lambin ſemin we,
Full of godeneſſe and of pite,
And inwarde we withoutin fable
Ben gredy wolvis raviſable.
We enviroun bothe londe and ſe;
With all the worlde werryin we:
We woll ordain of allè thing,
Of folkis gode and ther living.
If there be caſtill or cite
Within that any bougerons be,
Although that thei of Millaine were,
For thereof ben thei blamid there;
Or if a wight out of meſure
Would lene ther gold and take uſure,
For that he is ſo coveitous,
Or if he be to lechirous,
Or theſe that hauntin ſimonie,
Or provoſt full of trechirie,
Or prelate living jolilie,
Or prieſt that halt his quein him by,
Or oldè whoris hoſtilers,
Or othir baudes or bordillers,

Or ellis blamed of any vice,
Of whiche men shouldin doen justice;
By all the saincțis that we preie,
But thei defende them with lampreie,
With luce, with elis, with samons,
With tendir gees and with capons,
With tartis or with cheffis fat,
With deinte flaunis brode and flat,
With caleweis or with pullaile,
With coninges or with fine vitaile,
That we undir our clothis wide
Ymakin through our golet glide,
Or but he woll doe come in haste
Rae venison ybake in paste,
Whethir so that he loure or groine
He shall have of a corde a loigne,
With whiche men shall him binde and lede
To brenne him for his sinfull dede,
That men shull here him crie and rore
A mil'is waie about and more,
Or els he shall in prison die
But if he woll his frendship buie,
Or smertin that that he hath doe
More than his gilt amountith to.
But and he couthe thorough his sleight
Doe makin up a toure of height,
Nought rought I wher of stone or tre,
Or yerth or turvis, though it be,

Digitized by Google

Though it were of no vounde ſtöne
Ywrought with ſquare and ſcantilone,
So that the toure were ſtuffid well
With allè richis temporell;
And than that he would him up dreſſe
Enginis bothè more and leſſe,
To caſte at us by every ſide,
To herin his gode name wide.
Soche ſleightis I ſhullin you yeven,
Barelles of wine by ſixe or ſeven,
Or golde in ſackis grete plente,
He ſhould though ſone delivered be;
And if he have no ſuche pitences
Let him ſtudie' in equipolences,
And lerin lies and fallaces,
If that he would deſerve our graces,
Or we ſhall bere him ſoche witneſſe
Of ſinne and of his wretchidneſſe,
And doen his loſe ſo widè renne,
That all quicke we ſhouldin him brenne,
Or ellis yeve him ſoche penaunce
That is well worſe than the pitaunce.
For thou ſhalt nevir for nothing
Con knowen aright by ther clothing
The traitours full of trechèrie
But thou ther werkis can eſpie.
And ne had the gode keping be
Whilom of the' Univerſite,

That kepeth the kei of Christendome,
We' had ben tourmentid all and some.
  Soche ben the stinking Prophetis;
N'is none of 'hem that gode prophete is,
For thei through wickid entencion,
The yere of the' incarnacion
A thousande and two hundrid yere
Five-and-fifte, ferther ne nere,
Broughtin a boke with sorie grace,
To yeven ensample in common place,
That sayid thus, though it were fable,
This the Gospell pardurable
That fro the Holie Ghost is sent:
Well were it worthy to be ybrent.
Entitlid was in soche manere
This boke of whiche I tell here,
There n'as no wight in al Paris
Beforne our Ladie at parvis
That thei ne might the boke by;
The sentence plesed 'hem well truely.
To' the copie if him talent toke
Of the Evangelist'is boke,
There might he se by grete traisoun
Full many' a false comparisoun.
  As moche as thorough his grete might,
Be it of hete be it of light,
The sunne ysurmountith the mone,
That troublir is, and shaungith sone,

And the nutte kerneill dothe the ſhell,
I ſkorne nat that I you it tell,
Right ſo withoutin any gile
Surmountith this noble' Evangile
The worde of any' evangeliſt,
And to ther title thei toke Chriſt.
And many ſoche compariſoun,
Of whiche I make no mencioun,
Mightin men in that bokè finde,
Who ſo could of'hem havin minde.
The' Uni'verſite, that was a ſlepe,
Gan for to braied, and takin kepe,
And at the noiſe the hedde up caſt;
Ne nevir ſithen ſlept it faſt,
But up it ſtert, and armis toke
Ayenſt this falſe horrible boke,
All redy battaile for to make,
And to the judge the boke thei take.
But thei that broughtin the boke there
Hent it anone awaie for fere;
Thei n'old ſhewe it no more a dele,
But than it kept, and kepin wele,
Till ſoche a time that thei maie ſe
That thei ſo ſtrong ywoxin be
That no wight maie 'hem well withſtonde,
For by that boke thei durſt not ſtonde:
Awaie thei gonne it for to bere,
For thei ne durſtin not anſwere

Digitized by Google

By expoſicion ne gloſe
To that that clerkis woll appoſe
Ayenſt the curſidneſſe iwis
That in that boke ywrittin is.
Now wotte I nat ne can nat ſe
What manir ende that there ſhall be
Of all this whiche that thei yhide,
But yet algate thei ſhall abide
Till that thei maie it bette defende;
This trowe I beſt woll be ther ende.
Thus Antichriſt abidin we,
For we ben all of his meine,
And what man that woll not be ſo
Right ſone he ſhall his life forgo:
We woll a peple on him areiſe,
And through our gile doin him ceiſe,
And him on ſharpè ſperis rive,
Or othir waies bring him fro live;
But if that he woll folowe iwis
That in our boke ywrittin is.

Thus moche woll our bóke ſignifie,
That while Peter had maiſtirie
Maie nevir John ſhewe well his might.
Now have I you declarid right
The mening of the barke and rinde
That makith the entencions blinde;

But now at erſt I woll begin
To expoune you the pithe within,
And the ſeculers comprehende
That Chriſt'is lawe wollin defende,
And ſhould it kepin and maintenen
Ayeniſt them that all ſuſtenen,
And falſly to the peple techen
That John betokeneth 'hem to prechen
That there n'is lawe covenable
But thilke Goſpell pardurable
That fro the Holy Ghoſt was ſent
To tournin folke that ben miſwent.
The ſtrength of John thei undirſtonde
The grace in whiche thei ſaie thei ſtonde,
That doeth the ſinfull folke convert,
And 'hem to Jeſu Chriſt revert:
Full many'an othre' horriblete
Mowin men in that hokè ſe,
That ben commaundid doutileſs
Ayenſt the lawe of Rome expreſſe,
And all with Antichriſt thei holden,
As men maie in the boke beholden.
And than commaudin thei to ſleen
All tho that with Peter yben;
But thei ſhall nevir have that might,
And God to forne, for ſtrief to fight,
That thei ne ſhall ynough yfinde
That Peter's lawe ſhall have in minde,

And evir holde and ſo maintene,
That at the laſt it ſhall be ſene
That thei ſhall all comin thereto
For aught that thei can ſpeke or do.
And thilkè lawe ne ſhall not ſtonde
That thei by John have undirſtonde,
But maugre them it ſhall adoun,
And ben brought to confuſion.
But I woll ſtint of this matere,
For it is wondir long to here;
But had that ilkè boke endured
Of bettre' eſtate I were enſured,
And frendis have I yet parde
That han me ſet in grete degre.

Of all this worlde is emperour
Gile my fathir, the falſe trechour,
And empereſſe my mothir is,
Maugre the Holie Ghoſte iwis.
Our mightie linage and our rout
Reignith in every reigne about,
And well' is worthy we mini'ſters be,
For all this worldè governe we,
And can the folke ſo well deceve
That none our gilis can perceive,
And though thei doen thei dare not ſaie;
The ſothe dare no wight bewraie.

But he in Chriſt'is wrathe him ledeth
That more than Chriſt my brethrin dredeth;
He n'is no full gode champion
That dredeth ſoche ſimilacion,
Nor that for pain woll refuſin
Us to correcte and accuſin.
He woll not entremete by right,
Ne havin God in his eyen ſight,
And therefore God ſhall him punice:
But me ne reckith of no vice
Sithen men us loven communablie,
And holdin us for ſo worthie,
That we maie folke repreve echone,
And we n'ill have repreſe of none:
Whom ſhouldin folke worſhipin ſo
But us that ſtintin nevir mo
To patrin while that folke maie' us ſe
Though it not ſo behinde 'hem be?

And where is there more wode folie
Than to enhauncin chivalrie,
And lovin noble men and gaie,
That jolie clothis weren alwaie?
If thei be ſoche folke as thei ſemen,
So clene as men ther clothis demen,
And that ther wordes folowe ther dede,
It is grete pite out of drede
For thei woll be none hypocritis;
Of 'hem me thinkith gretè ſpite is:

Digitized by Google

I can not love 'hem on no side:
But beggirs with theſe hodis wide,
With ſleigh and palè facis lene,
And with graie clothis nat full clene,
But frettid full of tatar wagges,
And high ſhewis knoppid with dagges,
That frouncin like a qualè pipe,
Or botis riveling as a gipe;
To ſoche folke, as I you deviſe,
Should princis and theſe lordis wiſe
Take all ther landis and ther thinges,
Bothe warre and pece in govirninges,
To ſoche folke ſhould a prince him yeve
That would his life in honour live.
And if thei be nat as thei ſeme,
That ſervin thus the worlde to queme,
There would I dwellin to deceive
The folke, for thei ſhall nat perceve.
But I ne ſpeke in no ſoche wiſe
That men ſhould humble' habite diſpiſe;
So that no pride there undir be
No man ſhould hate, as thinkith me,
The povir man in ſoche clothing;
But God ne preſith him nothing
That ſaieth he hath the worlde forſake,
And hath to worldly glory' him take,
And woll of ſoche delicis uſe;
Who maie that beggir well excuſe?

Digitized by Google

That papelarde that him yeldith ſo,
And woll to worldly eſe ygo,
And ſaieth that he the worlde hath left,
And gredily it gripith eft,
He is the hounde, ſhame is to ſain,
That to his caſting goeth again.

But unto you dare I not lie,
But might I ſelin or eſpie
That ye percevid it nothing
Ye ſhouldin haye a ſtarke leſing:
Right in your honde thus to beginne,
I ne wolde it let for no ſinne.
The god lough at the wondir tho,
And every wight gan laugh alſo,
And ſayid, Lo, here a man right
For to be truſtie to every wight!

Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) ſaie to me,
Sith I thus have avaunced the,
That in my court is thy dwelling,
And of Ribaudes ſhalt be my king,
Wolt thou well holdin my forwardes?
Ye, Sir, quod he, from hens forwardes
Had ner your fathir here beforne
Servaunt ſo true ſithe he was borne.
That is ayeniſt all nature.
Sir, put you in that avinture,

Digitized by Google

For though ye borowes take of me
The ſikerer ſhall ye nevir be
For hoſtagis ne ſikirneſſe
Or chartris for to bere witneſſe:
I take your ſelf to recorde here
That men ne maie in no manere
Terin the wolfe out of his hide
Till he be ſlain bothe backe and ſide,
Though men him bete and all defile:
What! wene ye that I woll begile?
For I am clothid mekily
There undre' is all my trechiry;
Mine herte chaungith nevir the mo
For none habite in which I go:
Though I have chere of ſimpleneſſe
I am not werie of ſhreudneſſe:
My lemman, ſtrainid Abſtenaunce,
Hath miſtir of my purveiaunce,
She had full long ago be dedde
N'ere for my counſaile and my redde:
Let her alone, and you and me.
And Love anſwerid, I truſt the
Without borowe, for I woll none.
And Falſe Semblant the thefe anone
Right in that ilkè ſamè place,
That had of treſon all his face
Right blacke within and white without,
Thanking him gan on his knees lout.

Digitized by Google

Than was there nought but every man
Now to assaute that sailin can,
(Quod Love) and that full hardily:
Than armid thei 'hem cominly
Of soche armour as to 'hem fell.
Whan thei were armid fiers and fell
Thei went 'hem forthe all in a rout
And set the castill all about;
Thei will not awaie for no drede
Till it so be that thei ben dede,
Or till thei have the castill take.
And four battellis gan thei make,
And partid 'hem in foure anone,
And toke ther waie, and forthe thei gone
The foure gatis for to assaile,
Of whiche the kepirs woll not faile,
For thei ben neithir sicke ne dede,
But hardie folke, and strong in dede.
Now woll I saine the countenaunce
Of False Semblant and Abstinaunce,
That ben to Wickid Tong ywent;
But first thei helde ther parliment
Whethir it to be doin were
To makin 'hem be knowin there
Or ellis walkin forthe disgised;
But at the laste thei devised
That thei would gone in tapinage,
As it were in a pilgrimage,

Like gode and holie folke unfeined;
And anon Dame Abſtinence ſtreined
Toke on a robe of cameline
And gan her gratche as a bigine.
A largè coverchief of threde
She wrappid all about her hede;
But ſhe forgate not her pſaltere.
A paire of bedis eke ſhe bere
Upon a lace all of white threde,
On whiche that ſhe her bedis bede;
But ſhe ne bought 'hem nevre' a dele,
For thei were given her, I wote wele,
God wote of a full holie frere,
That ſaied he was her fathir dere,
To whom ſhe had oftiner went
Than any frere of his covent;
And he viſitid her alſo,
And many'a ſermone ſaied her to;
He n'olde let for no man on live
That he ne would her oftin ſhrive,
And with ſo grete devocion
Thei madin her confeſſion
That thei had oftin for the nones
Two heddis in one hode at ones.
Of faire ſhape I deviſed her the,
But pale of face ſometime was ſhe;
That falſè traitoureſſe untrewe
Was like that ſalowe horſe of hewe

Digitized by Google

That in the' Apocályps is shewed,
That signifieth tho folke beshrewed
That ben all full of trecherie,
And pale thorough hypocrisie;
For on that horse no colour is
But onely dedde and pale iwis:
Of soche a colour enlangoured
Was Abstinence iwis coloured;
Of her estate she her repented
Right as her visage represented.
She had a burdoune all of theft
That Gile had yeve her of his yeft,
And a skrippè of faint distresse,
That full was of elengènesse,
And forthe she walkid sobirlie.
And False Semblant saint, *Je vous die*,
And as it were for soche mistére
Doin on the cope of a frére,
With chere simple and full pitous
His loking was not disdeinous
Ne proude, but meke and ful pesible.
About his necke he bare a Bible,
And squyirly forthe gan he gon,
And for to rest his limmes upon
He had of tresón a potent;
As he were feble' his waie he went.
But in his sleve he gan to thring
A sour sharpe and well biting,

That was yforgid in a forge
Whiche that men clepin Coupè Gorge.
So long forth ther waie thei nomin
Till thei to Wickid Tong comin,
That at his gate ywas ſitting,
And ſawe folke in the waie paſſing.
The pilgrimis ſawe he faſt by
That herin 'hem full mekily,
And humbly thei with him ymette;
Dame Abſtinence firſt him ygrette,
And ſithe him Falſe Semblant ſalved,
And he 'hem, but he not remeved,
For he ne drede him not a dele,
For whan he ſawe ther facis wele
Alwaie in hertè him thought ſo
He ſhould knowin 'hem bothè two,
For well he knewe Dame Abſtinaunce,
But he ne knewe not Conſtreinaunce;
He knewe nat that ſhe was conſtrained,
Ne of her thev'is life yfained,
But wende ſhe come of will all fre,
But ſhe come in othir degre,
And if of gode will ſhe began
That will ywas failid her than.

And Falſe Semblant had he faine alſe,
But he knewe nat that he was falſe;
Yet falſe was he, but his falſneſſe
Ne coud he nat eſpie nor geſſe,

Digitized by Google

For Semblant was ſo ſlie ywrought
That falſeneſſe he nie eſpied nought;
But haddeſt thou knowin him beforne
Thou woldiſt on a boke have ſworne,
Whan thou him ſawe in thilke araie,
That he that whilom was ſo gaie,
And of the daunce Jolie Robin,
Was tho become a Jacobin:
But ſothly what ſo men 'hem call
Frere prechouris ben gode men all;
Ther ordir wickidly thei beren
Soche minſtrellis if that thei weren.
So ben Auguſtins and Cordileres,
And Carmis, and eke ſackid freres,
And all the freris ſhode and bare,
Though ſome of 'hem ben grete and ſquare,
Full holy men as I 'hem deme;
Everiche of hem would gode man ſeme;
But ſhalt thou nevir of apparence
Sein conclude gode conſequence
In any argument iwis,
If exiſtens all failid is;
For men maie finde alwaie ſopheme
The conſequence to envenemie,
Who ſo hath had the ſubtilte
The double ſentence for to ſe.
Whan the pilgrimis comin were
To Wickid Tong that dwellid there,

Digitized by Google

Ther harneis nigh 'hem was algate;
By Wickid Tong adoune thei ſate,
That badde 'hem nere him for to come,
And of tidingis tell him ſome,
And ſaied 'hem, What caſe makith you
To comin into this place now?

Sir, ſayid Strainid Abſtinaunce,
We for to dryin our penaunce
With hertis pitous and devout
Are commen as pilgrimes gon about;
Well nigh on fote alwaie we go;
Full doughtie ben our helis two,
And thus bothe we ben yſent
Throughout the worlde that is miſwent
To yeve enſample' and preche alſo;
To fiſhin ſinfull men we go,
For othir fiſhing ne fiſhe we:
And, leve Sir, for that charite,
As we be wont, erbo'rowe we crave;
Your life to amenne Chriſt it ſave,
And ſo it ſhould you not diſpleſe
We wouldin, if it were your eſe,
A ſhort ſermon unto you ſain.
And Wickid Tong anſwered again,
The houſe (quod he) ſoche as ye ſe
Shall nat be warnid you for me;

Saie what you liſt and I woll here.
Graunt mercie! tho ſwetè Sir dere,
Quod aldirfirſt Dame Abſtinence,
And thus began ſhe her ſentence:
Sir, the firſt vertue for certaine,
The gretiſt and moſt ſovèraine
That maie be founde in any man
For having or for wit he can
That is his tong for to refrain;
Therto ought every wight him pain,
For it is bettir ſtill to be
Than for to ſpekin harme parde,
And he that harkeneth it gladly
He is no gode man ſikirly.
And, Sir, aboven all othir ſinne
In that art thou moſt giltie inne;
Thou ſpake a jape not long a go,
And, Sir, that was right evill doe.
Of a yong man that here repaired,
And nevir yet this place apaired,
Thou ſaideſt he awaitid nothing
But to diſceve Faire Welcoming:
Ye ſaidin nothing ſothe of that,
But, Sir, ye lie, I tell you plat:
He cometh no more ne goeth parde;
I trowe ye ſhal him nevir ſe;
Faire Welcoming in priſon is
That ofte hath plaied with you er this

Digitized by Google

The fairiſt gamis that he coude
Withoutin filth, or ſtil or loude;
Now dare he not himſelfe ſolace;
Ye han alſo the man do chace,
That he dare neithir come ne go:
What mevith you to hate him ſo
But propirly your wickid thought,
That many' a falſe leſing hath thought,
That mevith your foule eloquence,
That janglith evre' in audience,
And on the folke ariſith blame,
And doeth 'hem diſhonour and ſhame
For thing that maie have no preving
But likelineſſe and contriving?
For I dare ſaine that Reſon demeth
It is not al ſoth thing that ſemeth;
And it is ſinne for to controve
Any thing that is to reprove;
This wote ye wele, and, Sir, therfore
Ye arne to blame mochil the more;
And nathèleſſe he reckith lite
He yeveth not now therof a mite,
For if he thoughtin harme, parfaie
He would ycome and gone all daie;
He ne coude not himſelf abſtene;
Now cometh he not, and that is ſene,
For he ne taketh of it no cure,
But if it be through avinture,

Digitized by Google

And laſſe than othir folke algate,
And thou here watchiſt at the gate
With ſpere in thine areſt alwaie,
There muſe muſarde all the longe daie;
Thou wakiſt night and daie for thought;
Iwis thy traveile is for nought,
And Jelouſie withoutin faile
Shall nevir quite the thy traveile;
And ſkathe is that Faire Welcoming,
Withoutin any treſpaſſing,
Shal wrongfully in priſon be,
There wepith and languiſhith he;
And though thou nevir yet iwis
Agiltiſt man no more but this
Take not a grefe, it were worthy
To put the out of this baily,
And aſtirwarde in priſon lie,
And fettrid the till that thou die;
For thou ſhalt for this ſinnè dwelle
Right in the devil's arſe of helle
But if that thou repentè the.
Maiſaie thou lieſt falſely (quod he.)
What, welcome with miſchauncè now!
Have I therfore herberid you
To ſaie me ſhame and eke reprove,
With ſorie happe to your behove?
Am I to day your herbegere?
Go herbir you els where than here

That han a lier callid me.
Two tregetours arte thou and he,
That in mine hous do me this ſhame,
And for my ſotheſawe ye me blame.
Is this the ſermon that ye me make?
To all the divils I me take,
Or ellis God thou me confounde,
But er men didden this caſtill founde
It paſſith not ten daies or twelve
But it was tolde right to my ſelve,
And as thei ſaide right ſo tolde I;
He kiſte the Roſè privily;
Thus ſaide I now, and have ſaid yore,
I n'ot where he did any more:
Why ſhould men ſaie me ſuche a thing
If that it had yben gabbing?
Right ſo ſaide I, and woll ſaie yet,
I trowe I lyid not of it;
And with my bemis I woll blowe
To allè neighbouris arowe
How he hath bothe comin and gone.
Tho ſpake Falſe Semblant right anone,
All is nat goſpell out of doute
That men ſaine in the toune aboute:
Lay no defe ere to my ſpeking,
I ſwere you, Sir, it is gabbing;
I trow ye wote well certainly
That no man loveth him tendirly

That ſaith him harme, if he wote it,
All be he ner ſo pore of wit;
And ſothe is alſo ſikirly,
This know ye, Sir, as well as I,
That lovirs gladly wol viſiten
The placis there ther loves habiten:
This man you loveth and eke honoureth,
This man to ſervin you laboureth,
And clepith you his frende ſo dere,
And this man makith you gode chere,
And every where that he you meteth
He you ſaleweth and he you greteth;
He preſith nat ſo ofte that ye
Oughte of' his coming encombrid be;
There preſin othir folke on you
Ful oftir than he doith now;
And if his hert him ſtrainid ſo
Unto the Roſè for to go
Ye ſhould him ſene ſo oftin nede
That ye ſhould take him with the dede;
He coude his comming not forbere,
Though ye him thrillid with a ſpere;
It n'ere not than as it is now;
But truſtith well, I ſwere it you,
That it is clene out of his thought.
Sir, certis he ne thinketh it nought,
No more ne doth Faire Welcoming,
That ſore abyith all this thing,

Digitized by Google

And if thei were of one assent,
Full sone ywere the Rose ybent,
Tho the malgre your's would ybe.
And, Sir, of o thing herkeneth me;
Sithe ye this man that lovith you
Han saide such harme and shame now,
Wittith well if he gessid it
Ye maie well demin in your wit
He ne wolde nothing love you so,
Ne callin you his frende also,
But night and daie he wollin wake
The castill to distroie and take,
Yf it were sothe as ye devise;
Or some man in some manir wise
Might it warnin him every dele,
Or by himselfe percevin wele,
For sithe he might not come and gone,
As he was whilom wonte to done,
He might it sone wite and se,
But now all othirwise wote he.
Than have we, Sir, all uttirly
Deservid hell, and jolily
The deth of helle doutilesse,
That thrallin folke so giltilesse.
False Semblant so provith this thing
That he ne can none answering,
And seeth alwaie soche apparaunce
That high he sel in repentaunce,

And ſaid him; Sir, it maie well be;
Semblant, a gode man ſemin ye,
And Abſtinence, ful wiſe ye ſeme;
Of o talent you bothe I deme:
What counſaile wol ye to me yeven?
Right here anon thou ſhalt be ſhriven,
And ſay thy ſinne withoutin more;
Of this ſhalt thou repent the ſore,
For I am prieſt, and have poſte
To ſhrive folk of moſt dignite
That ben as wide as world maie dure;
Of al this world I have the cure,
And that had nevir yet perſoun
Ne vicarie' of no manir toun.
And God it wot I have of the
A thouſande timis more pite
Than hath thy prieſt parochiall,
Though he thy frende be ſpeciall.
I have avantage in o wiſe,
That your prelates ben not ſo wiſe
Ne halfe ſo lettrid as am I;
I am licenſid boldily
In divinite for to rede,
And to confeſſin out of drede.
Yf that ye wol you now confeſſe,
And leve your ſinnis more and leſſe,
Without abode knele doune anon
And you ſhal have abſolucion.

Here endeth The Romaunt of the Roſe.

Digitized by Google

HERE FOLOWETH THE BOKE OF

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

IN FIVE BOKES.

THE double ſorow of Troilus to telle,
That was the King Priamus ſonne of Troy,
In loving how his aventuris felle
From wo to wele, and aſtir out of joy,
My purpoſe is er that I partè fro'y.
Thou Theſiphone! thou helpe me t'endite
This woful verſe, that wepin as I write.

To the I clepe, thou goddeſſe of tourment,
Thou cruil wight, ſorowing ay in paine!
Helpe me, that am the wofull inſtrument
That helpith lovirs as I can complaine;
For wel ſit it, the ſothè for to ſaine,
A woful wight to have a drery fere,
And to a ſorowfull tale a ſory chere.

For I, that god of Lov'is ſervauntes ſerve,
Ne dare to love for mine unlikelineſſe,
Prayin for ſpede, al ſhould I therfore ſterve,
So ferre am I fro his helpe in derkeneſſe;
But nathèleſſe if this may done gladneſſe
To any lovir, and his cauſe aveile,
Have he the thanke and mine be the traveile.

Troilus and Creſeide] In this excellent boke is ſhewed the fervent love of Troilus to Creſeide, whom he enjoyed for a time, and her grete untruthe to him againe in giving her ſelf to Diomedes, who in the end did ſo caſt her off that ſhe came to grete miſery. In whiche diſcourſe Chaucer liberally treteth of the diſvine purveiaunce. *Urry.*

Digitized by Google

But ye lovirs that bathin in gladneſſe,
Yf any drope of pite in you be,
Remembrith you of paſſid hevineſſe
That ye have felte, and on the' adverſite
Of othir folke, and thinkith how that ye
Han felte that Lovè durſt you to diſpleſe
Or ye han won him with to gret an eſe.
And prayith for 'hem that ben in the cace
Of Troilus, as ye may aftir here
That Love 'hem bring in hevin to ſolace;
And eke for me prayith to God ſo dere,
That I have might to ſhew in ſome manere
Suche paine and wo as Lov'is folke endure
In Troilus unſely avinture.
And biddith eke for them that ben diſpeired
In love, that nevir will recovered be,
And eke for them that falſely ben apeired
Through wickid tongis, be it he or ſhe,
And biddith God for his benignite
So graunt 'hem ſone out of this world to pace
That ben diſpairid out of Lov'is grace.
And biddith eke for them that ben at eſe
That God 'hem graunt in love perſeveraunce,
And ſende 'hem grace ther lovis for to pleſe,
That it to love be worſhip and pleſaunce;
For ſo hope I my ſelfe beſt to avaunce
To pray for them that Lov'is ſervauntes be,
And write ther wo, and live in charite;

Digitized by Google

And for to have of them compaſſioun,
As though I were ther ownè brothir dere.
Now herkenith with a gode entencioun,
For now wol I go ſtreight to my matere,
In whiche ye may the double ſorowes here
Of Troilus in loving of Creſeide,
And how ſhe forſoke him er that ſhe deide.

It is wel wiſt how that the Grekis ſtrong
In armis with a thouſand ſhippis went
To Troiè wardis, and the cite long
Beſiegedin, nigh ten yeres ere thei ſtent,
And how in divers wiſe and one entent,
The raviſhing to wreke of Queine Heleine,
By Paris don, thei wroughtin all their peine.

Now fell it ſo that in the toune there was
Dwelling a lord of gret authorite,
A gret divine, that clepid was Calcas,
That in that ſcience ſo' experte was that he
Knew wel that Troiè ſhould diſtroyid be
By anſwere of his god, that hight was thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus.

So whan this Calcas knew by calculing,
And eke by the' anſwere of this god Apollo,
That Grekis ſhouldin ſuche a peple bring
Thorow the whiche that Troy muſt be fordo,
He caſte anone out of the toune to go,
For wel he wiſt by ſorte that Troiè ſholde
Diſtroyid be, ye, would who ſo or n'olde;

Wherfore for to departin ſoftily
Toke purpoſe ful this wight, forknowing, wiſe,
And to the Grekis hoſt ful privily
He ſtale anone, and thei in curteis wiſe
Didin to him both worſhip and ſervice,
In truſt that he hath conning 'hem to rede
In every peril which that was to drede.
Grete rumour roſe whan it was firſt eſpied
In al the toune, and opinly was ſpoken
That Calcas traitour fled was, and alied
To them of Grece; and caſte was to be wroken
On him that falſly hath his faith to broken,
And ſaid that he and al his kinne atones
Were worthy to be brent both fell and bones.
Now had this Calcas lefte in this miſchaunce,
Unknowing of this falſe and wicked dede,
A doughtir whiche that was in grete penaunce,
And of her life ſhe was full ſore in drede,
And ne wiſt nevir what beſt was to rede;
And as a widowe was ſhe and alone,
And n'iſt to whom ſhe might ymake her mone.
Creſeide ywas this ladies name aright;
As to my dome in al Troy'is cite
Moſt fairiſt lady, paſſing every wight;
So angelike ſhone her natife beaute
That like a thing immortal ſemid ſhe,
And therwith was ſhe ſo parfite a creture
As ſhe had be made in ſcorning of Nature.

Digitized by Google

This lady, whiche that al day herde at ere
Her fathir's shame, his falshed, and traisoun,
Ful nigh out of her wit for sorow and fere,
In widowe's habite large of samite broun,
Before Hector on knees she fill adoun,
His mercy bad, her selfin excusing
With pitous voice, and tendirly weping.
Now was this Hector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorowful begone,
And that she was so faire a creature,
Of his godenesse he gladid her anone,
And saidè, Let your fathir's traison gone
Forth with mischaunce, and ye your self in joye
Dwellith with us whilis you lift in Troye,
And al the honour men may do you have,
As ferforth as though your fathir dwelt here,
Ye shul have, and your body shul men save,
As fer as I may ought enquire and here.
And she him thankid with ful humble chere,
And oftir wolde and it had been his will,
And toke her leve, went home, and helde her still.
And in her house she abode with such meine
As til her honour nede was for to holde;
And while she was dwelling in that cite
She kepte her estate, and of yong and olde
Ful wel beloved, and wel men of her tolde;
But whethir that she childrin had or none
I rede it nat, therfore I let it gone.

Digitized by Google

The thingis fellin as thei done of werre
Betwixin 'hem of Troie and Grekis ofte,
For ſome day boughtin thei of Troie it derre,
And eft the Grekis foundin nothing ſoft
The folke of Troie: and thus Fortune aloft
And undir efte gan 'hem to whelmin bothe,
Aftir her courſe, aie while that thei wer wrothe.
But how this toune came to diſtruccion
Ne fallith not to purpoſe me to tel;
For why? it were a long digreſſion
Fro my matir, and you to long to dwel;
But the Troyan jeſtis, all as thei fel
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
Who ſo that can may rede 'hem as thei write.
But though the Grekis them of Troie in ſhetten,
And ther cite beſegid al aboute,
Ther olde uſagis n'oldin thei not letten,
As to honouren ther goddis ful devoute,
But aldirmoſt in honour out of doute
Thei had a relicke hight Palladion,
That was ther truſt abovin everichon.
And ſo befel, whan comin was the time
Of Aprilis, whan clothid is the mede
With newè grene, of luſty Ver the prime,
And with ſwete ſmelling flouris white and rede
In ſondrie wiſe ſhewid, as I you rede,
The folke of Troie ther obſervaunces olde,
Palladion'is feſt, went for to holde.

Unto the temple in all ther beſt wiſe
In general went every manir wight
To herkin of Palladion's ſervice,
And namily many a luſty knight,
And many' a lady freſh and maidin bright;
Full well beſeyn the moſt meynè and leſt
Both for the ſeſon and for the hie feſt.
Among theſe othir folke was Creſeida,
In widdowe's habite blake; but nathèles
Right as our firſt lettir is now an A,
In beaute firſt ſo ſtode ſhe makèles;
Her godely loking gladdid all the pres;
N'as nevir ſene thing to be praiſed ſo derre,
Nor under cloudè blake ſo bright a ſterre
As was Creſeide, thei ſaidin everichone
That her beheldin in her blakè wede;
And yet ſhe ſtode ful lowe and ſtil alone,
Behinde all othir folke, in litil brede,
And nie the dore, aye undir ſham'is drede,
Simple' of atire, and debonaire of chere,
With full aſſurid loking and manere.
Dan Troilus, as he was wont to gide
His yongè knightis, ladde 'hem up and doune
In thilke large temple on evèry ſide,
Beholding aie the ladies of the toune
Now here now there, for no devocioune
Had he to none to revin him his reſt,
But gan to praiſe and lackin whom he leſt.

And in his walke ful faſte he gan to waiten
If knight or ſquyir of his company
Gan for to ſike, or let his eyin baiten
On any woman that he coude eſpie,
Then he would ſmile, and holde it a folie,
And ſay him thus; O Lord! ſhe ſiepith ſofte
For love of the, whan thou turniſt ful ofte.
I have herde tel pardieux of your living,
Ye lovirs, and of your leude obſervaunce,
And whiche a labour folke have in winning
Of love, and in the keping whiche doutaunce,
And whan your pray is loſt wo and penaunce.
O very fooles! blinde and nice be ye,
There is not one can ware by othir be.
And with that worde he gan caſt up his browe
Aſcaunce, lo! is this not wiſely iſpoken?
At whiche the god of Love gan lokin rowe
Right for diſpite, and ſhope him to be wroken;
He kidde anon his bowe was not to broken,
For ſodainly he hitte him at the full,
And yet as proude a pecocke can he pul.
O blinde worlde! o blinde entencioun!
How ofte fallith al th' effecte contraire
Of ſurquedrie and foule preſumpcioun?
For caught is proude and caught is debonaire;
This Troilus is clombin on the ſtaire,
And litil wenith that he mote diſcende;
But al day failith thing that folis wende.

Digitized by Google

As proude Bayard beginnith for to skippe
Out of the way (so prickith him his corne)
Till he a lashe have of the longè whippe,
Than thinkith he though I praunce al beforne
First in the traise, full fatte and newe ishorne,
Yet am I but an horse, and hors'is lawe
I must endure, and with my feris drawe:
So fared it by this fiers and proudè knight;
Though he a worthy king'is sonnè were,
And wenid that nothing had had such might
Ayenst his wil that should his hertè stere,
Yet with a loke his hert ywoxe on fire,
That he that now was most in pride above
Woxe sodainly moste subject unto love.
Forthy ensample takith of this man
Ye wisè, proude, and worthy folkis all,
To skornin Love, whiche that so sonè can
The fredome of your hertis to him thral;
For evir was and evir shall befal
That Love is he that al thingis may binde,
For no man maie fordo the law of kinde.
That this be sothe hath previd and doth yet,
For this (trowe I) ye knowin al and some,
Men redin nat that folke han gretir wit
Than thei that han ben most with love inome,
And strengist folke ben therwith ovircome,
The worthyist and gretist of degre;
This was and is, and yet man shal it se.

And truſtiche it ſitte well to be ſo,
For aldirwiſeſt han therwith ben pleſed,
And thei that han ben aldirmoſte in wo
With love han ben comfortid moſt and eſed,
And ofte it hath the cruill herte apeſed,
And worthy folke made worthyir of name,
And cauſith moſt to dredin vice and ſhame.
Now ſith it may nat godely be withſtonde,
And is a thing ſo vertuous in kinde,
Ne grudgith nought to Love for to ben bonde,
Sithe as him ſelvin liſt he may you binde;
The yerde is bette that bowin wol and winde.
Than that that breſt; and therfore I you rede
Folowith him that ſo well can you lede.
But for to tellin forth in ſpeciall
As of this king'is ſonne of whiche I tolde,
And levin othir thing collaterall,
Of him thinke I my tale forth to holde,
Bothe of his joye and of his caris colde,
And all his werke as touching this matere,
For I it gan, I wol therto refere.
Within the temple wente him forth playing
This Troilus with every wight about,
On this lady and now on that loking,
Whereſo ſhe were of toune or of without;
And upon caſe befil that through a rout
His eye ypercid, and ſo depe it went
Til on Creſeide it ſmote, and there it ſtent,

Digitized by Google

And sodainly for wondir wext afboned,
And gan her bet beholde in thrifty wise;
O mercy, God! thought he, where hast thou wonned,
That arte so faire and godely to devise?
Therwith his hert began to sprede and rise,
And softe he sighid, lest men might him here,
And caught ayen his formir playing chere.
She n'as nat with the leste of her stature,
But al her limmis so wel answering
Werin to womanhode, that creature
Was nevir lasse manisshe in seming,
And eke the purè wife of her mening
She shewid wel, that men might in her gesse
Honour, estate, and womanly noblesse.
Tho Troilus right wondir wel withall
Gan for to like her mening and her chere,
Whiche somdele deignous was, for she let fal
Her loke alite a side, in suche manere
Ascauncis, what! may I nat stondin here?
And aftir that her loking gan she light,
That never thought him sene so gode a sight.
And of her loke in him there gan to quicken
So grete desire and suche affectioun,
That in his hert'is bottom gan to sticken
Of her his fixe and depe impressioun;
And though he erst had porid up and doun
Than was he glad his hornis in to shrinke;
Unnethis wist he how to loke or winke.

Digitized by Google

Lo! he that lete him ſelvin ſo conning,
And ſcornid 'hem that lov'is painis drien,
Was ful unware that Love had his dwelling
Within the ſubtil ſtremis of her eyen,
That ſodainly him thought that he felte dien
Right with her loke the ſpirite in his herte:
Bleſſid be Love, that thus can folke converte!
She thus in blake loking to Troilus
Ovir al thing he ſtode for to beholde,... ...
But his deſire, ne wherefore he ſtode thus,
He neithir chere made ne worde thereof tolde,
But from aferre, his manir for to holde,
On othir thing ſomtime his loke he caſt,
And efte on her, while that the ſervice laſt.
And aftir this, not fully all awhaped,
Out of the temple eſiliche he wente,
Repenting him that evir he had japed
Of Lov'is folke, leſt fully the diſcente
Of ſcorne fil on him ſelf; but what he mente
Leſte it were wiſte on any manir ſide
His wo he gan diſſimulin and hide.
Whan he was fro this temple thus departed
He ſtreight anone unto his palais turneth;
Right with her loke thorough ſhottin and darted,
Al frainith he in luſte that he ſojourneth,
And all his chere and ſpeche alſo' he abnormeth,
And aie of Lov'is ſervauntes every while,
Himſelfe to wrie, at 'hem he gan to ſmile,

Digitized by Google

And sayd, Ah, Lord! so ye live all in lust,
Ye lovirs, for the conningist of you,
That servith most ententifeliche and best,
Him tite as oftin harme therof as prowe;
Your hire is quite ayen, ye, God wote howe,
Not wel for wel, but skorne for gode servise;
In faithe your ordir is ruled in gode wise.
In no certaine ben your observaunces,
But it in a few sely pointis be,
Ne nothing asketh so gret attendaunces
As doth your laie, and that knowin al ye;
But that is not the worst, as mote I the,
But tolde I which were the worst point, I leve,
Al saide I sothe, ye woldin at me greve.
But take this; that ye lovirs ofte eschewe,
Or ellis done of gode entencion,
Ful ofte thy lady wol it misseconstrewe,
And deme it harme in her opinion,
And yet if she for othir encheson
Be wroth, then shalt thou have a groin anone:
Lorde! wel is him that may bene of you one!
But for al this, whan that he seeth his time,
He held his pees, non othir bote him gained,
For Love began his fethirs so to lime,
That wel unneth unto his folke he fained
That othir bely nedis him distrained:
So wo was him that what to done he n'ist,
But bad his folke to gone where as 'hem list.

Digitized by Google

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He doune upon his bedd'is fete him ſette,
And firſt he gan to ſike and efte to grone,
And thought aie on her ſo withoutin lette,
That as he ſatte and woke his ſpirite mette
That he her ſaugh and temple', and all the wiſe
Right of her loke, and gan it newe aviſe.
Thus gan he make a mirrour of his minde,
In whiche he ſaugh all wholly her figure,
And that he wel coude in his hert yfinde
It was to him a right gode avinture
To love ſuche one, and if he did his cure
To ſervin her yet might he fal in grace,
Or els for one of her ſervauntes pace:
Imagining that ne travaile nor grame
Ne might for ſo godely an one be lorne,
As ſhe ne him for his deſire no ſhame,
Al were it wiſte, but in priſe and upborne
Of allè lovirs, wel more than beforne.
Thus argumentid he in his ginning,
Ful unaviſid of his wo comming.
Thus toke he purpoſe Lov'is craſte to ſewe,
And thought that he would workin privily,
Firſt for to hide all his deſire in mewe,
From every wight iborne all uttirly,
But he might ought recovered ben therby,
Remembring him that *Love to wide iblowe*
Yelt littir frute, although ſwete ſede be ſowe.

And ore al this ful mokil more he thought
What for to ſpeke and what to holdin inne,
And what to artin her to love he ſought,
And on a ſonge anone right to beginne,
And gan loude on his ſorowe for to winne;
For with gode hope he gan fully aſſente
Creſeida for to love, and nought repente.

And of his ſonge not onely his ſentence,
(As write mine auctour, callid Lolius)
But plainely, ſave our tong'is difference,
I dare wel ſay in al that Troilus
Saied in his ſonge, lo! every word right thus
As I ſhal ſaine, and who ſo liſt it here
Lo! next this verſe he may it findin here.

The ſonge of Troilus out of Petrarche.

If no love is, o God, what fele I ſo!
And if love is, what thing and whiche is he?
If love be gode from whence comith my wo?
If it be wicke a wondir thinkith me,
Whan every turment and adverſite
That cometh of him may to me ſavery thinke,
For aye more thurſt I the more that I drinke.

And if that at mine ownè luſt I brenne,
From whence comith my wailing and my pleinte?
If harme agre me wherto plaine I thenne?
I n'ot nere why unwery that I feinte.
O quickè deth! o ſwetè harme ſo queinte!
How may I ſe in me ſoche quantite
But if that I conſente that it ſo be?

Digitized by Google

And if that I consente I wrongfully
Complaine iwis. Thus possid to and fro,
As stereless wight is in a bote, am I,
Amidde the se atwixin windis two
That in contrarie stondin evirmo.
Alas! what is this wondir maladie?
For hete of colde, for colde of hete, I die.
And to the god of Love thus sayid he
With pitous voice; O Lorde! now your'is is
My spirite, whiche that oughtin your'is be;
You thonke I, Lord, that han me brought to this;
But whethir goddesse or woman iwis
She be I n'ot whiche, that ye do me serve,
But as her man I wol aie live and sterve.
Ye stondin in her eyin mightily,
As in a place unto your vertue digne,
Wherfore o Lord! if my service or I
May likin you, so bethe me to ben,
For mine estate royal here I resigne
Into her honde, and with ful humble chere
Become her man, as to my lady dere.

Endeth the songe.

In him ne deigned to sparin blode royall
The fire of love, wherefro may God me blesse!
Ne him forbare in no degre for all
His vertue or his excellent prowesse,
But helde him as his thrall lowe in distresse,
And brende him so in sondrie wise aie newe,
That sixty times a day he loste his hewe.

Digitized by Google

So muchill daie fro daie his ownè thought
For luſte to her gan quickin and encreſe,
That everiche othir charge he ſette at nought;
Forthy ful oftin, his hote fire to ceſe,
To ſene her godely loke he gan to preſe,
For therby to ben eſid wel he wende,
And aie the nere he was the more he brende;
For aie the nese the fire the hottir is,
This (trowe I) knowith al this company;
But were he ferre or nese I dare ſaie this,
By night or daie, for wiſedome or folie,
His hertè, whiche that is his breſt'is eye,
Was aie on her, that fairir was to ſene
Than evir was Helein or Polyxene.
Eke of the daie there paſſid nat an houre
But to himſelf a thouſande times he ſaide,
God godely, to whom I ſerve and laboure
As beſt I can, now would to God, Creſeide,
Ye wouldin on me rue er that I diede;
My dere herte, alas! mine hele, and my hewe,
And life, is loſte but ye will on me rewe.
All othir dredis werin from him fledde
Bothe of th' aſſiege and his ſalvacion,
Ne' in his deſire none othir fancy bredde
But argumentes to this concluſion,
That ſhe on him would han compaſſion,
And he to ben her man while he maie dure;
Lo here his life, and from his death his cure.

Digitized by Google

The ſharpè ſhouris fell of armis preve
That Hector or his othir brethrin didden
Ne made him onely therefore onis meve,
And yet was he, wher ſo men went or ridden,
Found one the beſt, and lengiſt time abiden
There peril was, and eke did ſuche travail
In armis that to thinke it was mervaile.
But for none hate he to the Grekis had,
Ne alſo for the reſcous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armis for to mad,
But onely lo! for this concluſioun,
To likin her the bet for his renoun:
Fro daie to daie in armis ſo he ſpedde
That all the Grekis as the deth him dredde.
And fro this forthe tho reſt him love his ſlepe,
And made his mete his foe, and eke his ſorow
Gan multiplie, that who ſo tokè kepe
It ſhewid in his hewe both even and morow,
Therfore a title he gan him to borowe
Of othir ſickeneſſe, leſt men of him wende
That the hotte fire of cruill love him brende;
And ſaied he by a fevir fared amis:
But how it was certain I cannot ſay,
If that his ladie underſtode nat this,
Or fainid her ſhe n'iſt, one of the tweie;
But well rede I that by no manir weie
Ne ſemid it as if ſhe on him rought,
Or of his paine, what ſo evir he thought.

But than yfelt this Troilus ſoche wo
That he was wel nigh wode; for aie his drede
Was this, that ſhe ſome wight had lovid ſo
That ner of him ſhe would han takin hede,
For whiche him thought he felte his hertè blede;
Ne of his wo ne durſt hé nought begin
To tellin her for all this worlde to win.
But whan he had a ſpace left from his care
Thus to himſelf full oft he gan to plain;
He ſaied, O fole! now art thou in the ſnare
That whilom japediſt at lov'is pain;
Now art thou hent, now gnaw thin ownè chain:
Thou wert aie woned eche lovir reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canſt nat the defende.
What woll now every lovir ſaine of the
If this be wiſt? but er in thine abſence
Laughin in ſcorne, and ſain, Lo! there goth he;
That is the man of ſo grete ſapience,
That helde us lovirs leſte in reverence:
Now thanked be God he maie gon on the daunce
Of 'hem that Love liſte febly to avaunce:
But o thou wofull Troilus! God would
(Sithe thou muſt lovin through thy deſtine)
That thou befet wer of ſoche one that ſhould
Know all thy wo, all lackid her pite!
But all ſo colde in love towardis the
Thy ladie is as froſt in wintir mone,
And thou fordon as ſnowe in fire is ſone.

Digitized by Google

God would I were arivid in the port
Of deth, to whiche my ſorowe woll me lede!
Ah, Lorde! to me it were a grete comfort,
Than were I quite of languiſhing in drede,
For by my hidde ſorowe iblowe in brede
I ſhall bejapid ben a thouſande time
More than that ſole of whoſe ſoly men rime.
But now helpe God, and ye my ſwete, for whom
I plaine; icought ye nevir wight ſo faſt:
O mercie, my dere herte! and helpe me from
The deth, for I while that my life maie laſt
More than my life woll love you to my laſt;
And with ſome frendly loke gladith me, ſwete!
Though nevir nothing more ye me behete.
Theſe wordis and full many' an othir mo
He ſpake, and callid evir in his pleinte
Her name, to tellin unto her his wo,
Till nigh that he in ſalte teris was dreinte:
All was for nought; ſhe herd nat his compleinte;
And whan that he bethought on that folie
A thouſand folde his wo gan multiplie.
Bewailing in his chambir thus alone
A frende of his, that callid was Pandare,
Came onis in unware, and herd him grone,
And ſawe his frend in ſoche diſtreſſe and care;
Alas! (quod he) who cauſith all this fare?
O mercie God! what unhap maie this mene?
Han now thus ſone the Grekis made you lene?

Or haſt thou ſome remorce of conſcience?
And art now fall in ſome devocioun,
And wailiſt for thy ſinne and thine offence,
And haſt for ferde yeought contricioun?
God ſave 'hem that beſiegid han our toun,
That ſo can laie our jolite on preſſe,
And bring our luſtie folke to holineſſe!
Theſe wordis ſaied he for the nonis all,
That with ſoche thing he might him angry maken,
And with his angre doen his ſorowe fall
As for a time, and his corage awaken;
But well wiſt he, as ferre as tongis ſpeken,
There n'as a man of gretir hardineſſe
Than he, ne more deſirid worthineſſe.
What cas (quod Troïlus) or what avinture
Hath gidid the to ſene me languiſhing,
That am refuſe of every creture?
But for the love of God, at my praying,
Go hence awaie, for certis my dying
Woll the diſeſe, and I mote nedis deie,
Therfore go waie; there n'is no more to ſeie.
But if thou wene I be thus ſicke for drede
It is nat ſo, and therefore ſcorne me nought;
There is an othir thing I take of hede
Wel more than ought the Grekis han yet wrought,
Which cauſe is of my deth for ſorow and thought,
But though that I now tell it the ne leſte
Be thou nat wrothe; I hide it for the beſte.

Digitized by Google

This Pandare, that nigh malt for wo and routh,
Full oftin saied, Alas! what maie this be?
Now frende, (quod he) if evir love or trouth
Hath ben er this betwixin the and me
Ne doe thou nevir soche a cruike
To hidin fro thy frende so grete a care;
Wost thou not well that it am I Pandare?
I woll partake with the of all thy paine;
If it so be I doe the no comfort,
As it is frend'is right, sothe for to saine,
To enterpartin wo as glad disport
I have and shall; for true or false report,
In wrong and right, iloved the all my live;
Hide not thy wo from me, but tell it blive.
Than gan this sorowfull Troilus to sike,
And saied him thus; God leve it be my best
To tellin the, for sithe it maie the like
Yet woll I tell it the though my herte brest,
And well wote I thou maiest do me no rest,
But lest thou deme that I trust nat to the:
Now herkin frende, for thus it stant with me.
Love, ayenst the whiche who so defendith
Him selvin moste him aldirlest availeth,
With dispeire so sorely me offendith
That streight unto the deth mine hert yfaileth,
Thereto desire so brennyngly me' assaileth
That to ben slain it were a gretir joie
To me than king of Grece to be and Troie.

Digitized by Google

Suffisith this, my fully frende Pandare,
That I have saied, for now wotest thou my wo,
And for the love of God my coldè care
So hide it well, I tolde it ner to mo,
For harmis mightin folowen mo than two
If it were wist; but be thou in gladnesse,
And let me serve unknowe of my distresse.

How hast thou thus unkindely and long
Hid this fro me, thou fole? (quod Pandarus)
Paraventure thou maiest for soche one long
That mine avise anone maie helpin us.
This were a wondir thing, (quod Troilus)
Thou couldist ner in love thy selfin wisse,
How devill maiest thou bringin me to blisse?

Ye, Troilus, now herkin, (quod Pandare.)
Though I be nice, it happith oftin so,
That one that of axis doeth full ill fare
By gode counsaile can kepe his frend therfro;
I have my self yseine a blinde man go
There as he fell which that could lokin wide:
A fole maie eke a wise man oftin gide.

A whetstone is no kerving instrument,
But yet it makith sharpe kerving tolis;
And if thou wost that I have aught miswent
Eschue thou that, for soche thing to schole is;
Thus oftin wise men ben warin by folis:
If thou so do thy wit is well bewared;
By his contrary' is every thing declared.

For how might evir ſwetneſſe have be know
To him that nevir taſtid bittirneſſe?
No man ne wot what gladneſſe is I trowe
That nevir was in ſorowe' or ſome diſtreſſe;
Eke white by black, by ſhame eke worthines;
Eche ſet by othir more for othir ſemeth,
As men maie ſene, and ſo the wiſe it demeth.
Sithe thus of two contraries is a lore,
I that in love ſo oftin have aſſayed . . .
Grevaunce ought to connin well the more
Counſailin the of that thou art diſmaied,
And eke the ne ought not ben ill apaied
Though I deſirin with the for to bere
Thine hevie charge; it ſhall the laſſe the dere.
I wote well that it farid thus by me
As to my brothir Paris an heirdeſſe
Whiche that yclepid was Oenone
Wrote in a complaint of her hevineſſe;
Ye ſawe the lettir that ſhe wrote I geſſe.
Naie, nevir yet iwis (quod Troilus.)
Now (quod Pandare) herkinith, it was thus.
Phœbus, that firſt found art of medicine,
(Quod ſhe) and coud in every wight'is care
Remedy' and rede by herbis he knewe fine,
Yet to himſelf his conning was full bare,
For love had him ſo boundin in a ſnare,
All for the doughter of the King Admete,
That all his craft ne coud his ſorowe bete.

Digitized by Google

Right ſo fare I; unhappily for me
I love one beſt, and that me ſmertith ſore,
And yet paravintire I can rede the
And nat my ſelf; repreve thou me no more,
I have no cauſe I wote well for to fore
As doeth an hauke that liſtith for to plaie,
But to thine helpe yet ſomwhat can I ſaie.
And of o thing right ſikir maieſt thou be,
That certain for to dyin in the pain
That I ſhall nevir mo diſcovir the,
Ne by my trouth I kepe nat to reſtrain
The fro thy love, although it were Helein,
That is thy brothir's wife, if I it wiſt,
Be what ſhe be, and love her as the liſt.
Therefore as frendfulliche in me aſſure,
And tell me platte what is thine encheſon
And finall cauſe of wo that ye endure,
For doubtith nothing mine entencion
N'as nat to you of reprehenſion
To ſpeke as now, for no wight maie bireve
A man to love till that him liſt to leve.
And therefore wetith wel that both ben vicis,
Miſtruſtin all or ellis all beleve;
But well I wote the mene of it no vice is,
As for to truſtin ſome wight is a preve
Of trouth, and forthy would I fain remeve
Thy wrong conceipt, and do the ſome wight truſt
Thy wo to tell, and tell me if the luſt.

Digitized by Google

The wiſe ſaieth, Wo is him that is alone,
For and he fall he hath none helpe to riſe;
And ſithe thou haſt a ſelowe tell thy mone,
For this pe is nought certain the next wiſe
To winnin love, as techin us the wiſe,
To waile and wepe as Niobe the quene,
Whoſe teris yet in marble ben iſene.
Let be thy weping and thy drerineſſe,
And let us leſſin wo with othir ſpeche,
So maie thy woſull time ſemin the leſſe;
Delitith nought in wo thy wo to ſeche,
As doen theſe folis that ther ſorowes eche
With ſorowe whan thei han miſavinture,
And luſtin nought to ſechin othir cure.
Men ſaine, *To wretche is conſolacion*
To have an othir fclowe in his paine;
That ought well to ben our opinion,
For we bothe thou and I of love do plain;
So full of ſorowe am I, ſothe to ſaine,
That certainly as now no more hard grace
Maie ſit on me; for why? there is no ſpace.
Yf God wol thou art nought agaſt of me
Leſt I would of thy lady the begile;
Thou woſt thy ſelf whom that I love parde,
As I beſt can, gon ſithin longè while,
And ſithe thou woſt I do it for no wile,
And ſithe I am he that thou truſtith moſt,
Telme ſomwhat, ſens al my wo thou woſte.

Yet Troilus for al this no worde ſaide,
But long he laie as ſtill as he ded were,
And aftir this with ſiking he abraide,
And to Pandarus voice he lent his ere,
And up his eien caſt he; and than in fere
Was Pandarus leſte that in a frenſeye
He ſhould yfal, or ellis ſonè deye;
And ſaid, Awake, full wondirliche and ſharpe;
What ſlombriſt thou as in a lethargy?
Or art thou like an aſſe unto the harpe,
That herith ſoun, whan men the ſtringis ply,
But in his mind of that no melodie
Maie ſinkin him to gladin, for that he
So dull is in his beſtialite?
And with this Pandare of his wordis ſtent,
But Troilus to him no thing anſwerde;
For why? to tellin was nought his entent
Ner to no man for whom that he ſo ferde,
For it is ſaid, *Men makin ofte a yerde*
With which the makir is himſelfe ibeten
In ſondrie manir, as theſe wiſe men treten.
And namèliche in his counſaile telling
That touchith love, that ought to ben ſecre,
For of himſelfe it woll inough out ſpring,
But if that it the bet governid be;
Eke ſomtime it is crafte to ſeme to fle
Fro thing which in effecte men huntin faſte:
Al this gan Troilus in his herte caſte,

But nathèleſſe whan he had herde him crie
Awake, he gan to fikè wondir ſore,
And ſayd, My frende, although that ſtill I lie
I n'am not defe; now pece, and crie no more,
For I have herde thy wordis and thy lore,
But ſuffir me my fortune to bewailen,
For thy proverbis may nought me availen;
Nor othir cure ne canſt thou none for me,
Eke I n'il not ben curid; I woll die:
What knowin I of the Quene Niobe?
Let be thine olde enſamplis, I the prey.
No, frende, (quod Pandarus) therfore I ſey
Suche is delite of folis to bewepe
Ther wo, but to ſekin bote thei ne kepe.
Now know I that there reſon in the faileth;
But tellith me, if I wiſte what ſhe were
For whome that the al miſavinture aileth
Durſte thou truſt that I tolde it in her ere
Thy wo, ſith thou darſt not thy ſelfe for fere,
And her beſought on the to han ſome routhe?
Why nay, (quod he) by God and by my trouthe.
What! not as beſily (quod Pandarus)
As though mine ownè life lay in this nede?
Why no, parde, Sir, (quod this Troilus.)
And why? For that thou ſhouldiſt nevir ſpede.
Woſt thou that well? Ye, that is out of drede,
(Quod Troilus) for all that er ye comme
She wol to no ſuche wretche as I be wonne.

Digitized by Google

(Quod Pandarus) Alas! what may this be
That thou diſpairid art thus cauſileſſe?
What! liveth nat thy lady? *Benedicite!*
How woſt thou ſo that thou art gracileſſe?
Suche evil is not alwaie botèleſſe;
Why put not thus impoſſible thy cure,
Sithe thing to come is ofte in avinture?
I grauntin well that thou enduriſt wo
As ſharpe as doth he Tityus in hell,
Whoſe ſtomake foulis tirin evir mo
That hightin Vulturis, as bokis tell;
But I may not endurin that thou dwell
In ſo unſkilful an opinion
That of thy wo n'is no curacion;
But onis n'ilt thou for thy cowarde herte,
And for thine ire and foliſh wilfulneſſe,
For wantruſt tellin of thy ſorowe' ſmerte,
Ne to thine ownè helpe do beſineſſe
As moche as ſpeke a worde ye more or leſſe,
But lieſt as he that of life nothing retche:
What woman living coude love ſuche a wretche?
What may ſhe demin othir of thy dethe,
Yf thou thus die, and ſhe n'ot why it is,
But that for fere is yoldin up thy brethe
For Grekis han beſiegid us iwis?
Lord! which a thanke ſhalt thou have than of this!
Thus wol ſhe ſaine, and al the toune atones,
The wretch is ded, the divel have his bones!

Digitized by Google

Thou maiſte alone here wepe, and crie, and knele,
And love a woman that ſhe wote it nought,
And ſhe wol quite it that thou ſhalt not fele,
Unknow unkiſt, and loſt that is unſought.
What! many a man hath love ful dere abought
Twenty wintir that his lady ne wiſte,
That never yet his ladie's mouthe he kiſte.

What! ſhould he therfore fallin in diſpaire,
Or be recreaunte for his ownè tene,
Or ſlain himſelf, all be his ladie faire?
Naie, naie; but er in one be freſh and grene,
To ſerve and love ay his dere hert'is quene,
And thinke it is a guerdone her to ſerve
A thouſande folde more than he can deſerve.

And of that wordè toke hede Troilus,
And thought anone what folie he was in,
And how that ſothe him ſayid Pandarus,
That for to ſlaen himſelf might he not win,
But bothe to doen unmanhode and a ſinne,
And of his deth his ladie nought to wite,
For of his wo God wot ſhe knewe full lite.

And with that thought he gan ful ſore to ſike,
And ſaied, Alas! what is me beſt to doe?
To whom Pandare anſwerid, If the like
The beſt is that thou tell me all thy wo,
And have my trouth but if thou find it ſo,
I be thy bote or that it ben full long
To pecis doe me drawe and ſithin hong.

Ye, ſo ſaieſt thou, (quod Troilus) alas!
But God wot it is naught, the rathir ſo
Full harde it were to helpin in this caas,
For well finde I that Fortune is my fo,
Ne all the men that ridin con or go
Maie of her cruill whele the harme withſtond,
For as her liſt ſhe plaieth with fre and bond.
(Quod Pandarus) Than blamiſt thou Fortune
For thou art wroth ye now at erſt I ſe;
Woſt thou not wel that Fortune is commune
To every manir wight in ſome degre?
And yet thou haſt this comfort, lo! parde,
That as her joyis motin ovirgone
So mote her ſorowes paſſin everichone.
For if her whele ſtint any thing to tourne
Than ceſſith ſhe Fortune anone to be;
Now ſith her whele by no waie maie ſojourn
What woſt thou of her mutabilite?
Right as thy ſelf luſt ſhe woll done by the,
Or that ſhe be nought ferre fro thine helping,
Paravinture thou haſt cauſe for to ſing.
And therfore woſt thou what I the beſeche?
Let be thy wo and tourning to the grounde,
For who ſo liſte have heling of his leche
To him bihovith firſt unwrie his wounde;
To Cerberus in hell aie be I bound,
Were it eke for my ſuſtir all thy ſorowe,
By my gode will ſhe ſhould be thine to morowe.

Digitized by Google

Loke up I saie, and tell me what she is
Anone, that I maie gone about thy nede.
Know I her aught? for my love tell me this,
Than would I hope the rathir for to spede.
Tho gan the veine of Troilus to blede,
For he was hit, and woxe all redde for shame.
Aha! (quod Pandare) here beginnith game.
And with that worde he gan him for to shake,
And saied him thus; Thefe, thou shalt her name tell:
But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake,
As though men should han had him into hel,
And saied, Alas! of all my wo the well
Than is my swetè foe callid Creseide;
And well nigh with that word for fere he deide.
And whan that Pandare herd her namè neven,
Lorde! he was glad, and sayid, Frend so dere,
Now fare a right, for Jov'is name in heven
Love hath befet the well: be of gode chere,
For of gode name, and wisedom, and manere,
She hath inough, and eke of gentillnesse:
If she be faire thou wost thy self I gesse.
Ne nevir seie I a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne gladdir, ne of speche
A frendlier, ne none more gracious
For to doe well, ne lasse had nede to seche
What for to doen, and all this bet to eche
In honour to as ferre as she may stretche:
A king'is herte semith by her's a wretche.

Digitized by Google

And forthy loke of gode comforte thou be,
For certainly the firſte pointe is this
Of noble corage, and wele ordaine the
A man to have pece with himſelfe iwis;
So oughtiſt thou, for nought but gode it is
To lovin wel and in a worthy place;
The ought not to clepin it happe but grace.
And alſo thinke, and therwith gladdin the,
That ſith thy lady vertuous is all,
So foloweth it that there is ſome pite
Amongis all theſe othir in generall,
And for thei ſe that thou in ſpeciall
Requiriſt nought that is ayen her name,
For Vertue ſtretchith not himſelfe to ſhame.
But wel is me that evir I was borne
That thou beſet art in ſo gode a place,
For by my trouth in love I durſt have ſworne
The ſhould nevir have tidde ſo faire a grace;
And woſt you why? for thou were wont to chace
At Love in ſcorne, and for diſpite him call
Saint Idiote, lorde of theſe folis all.
How eftin haſt thou madin thy nice japes?
And ſaied that Lov'is ſervauntes everichone
Of nicete ben very godd'is apes,
And ſome of them would monche ther mete alone
Ligging a bedde, and make 'hem for to grone,
And ſome thou ſaidiſt had a blaunche fevere,
And praidiſt God thei ſhould nevir kevere:

And some of 'hem toke on 'hem for the cold
More than inough; so saidist thou full oft,
And some han sainid oftin time, and tolde
How that thei wakin whan thei slepin soft,
And thus thei would have set 'hem self aloft,
And nathèlesse were undir at the laste:
Thus saidist thou, and japidist full faste.
Yet saidist thou that for the morè part
These lovirs wouldin speke in generall,
And thoughtin that it was a sikir art
For failing for to' affayin ovir all:
Now maie I jape of the if that I shall;
But nathèlesse although that I should deie
Thou ne art none of tho I dare well seie.
Now bete thy brest, and saie to god of Love,
Thy grace, o Lord! for now I me repent
If I misspake, for now my self I love;
Thus saie with all thine hert in gode entent.
(Quod Troilus) Ah, Lorde! I me consent,
And praie to the my japis thou foryeve,
And I no more will jape while that I live.
Thou saiest well, (quod Pandare) and now I hope
That thou the godd'is wrath hast al apesed;
And sithin thou hast weptin many'a drope,
And said soch thing wherwith thy god is plesed,
Now would God nevir but that thou were esed,
And thinke well she of whom rest all thy wo
Hereastir maie thy comfort ben also.

For thilke ground that berith the wedis wicke
Bereth eke these wholsome herbis as full oft;
And nexte to the foule nettle rough and thicke
The rose ywexith sote, and smothe, and soft,
And next the valey is the hill aloft,
And next the derkè night is the glad morowe,
And also joié is next the fine of sorowe.
Now loke that well attempre be thy bridell,
And for the best aie suffre to the tide,
Or ellis all our labour is on idell:
He bastith well that wisely can abide.
Be diligent and true, and aie well hide:
Be lustie, fre, perfever in servise,
And all is well if thou werke in this wise:
But he that partid is in every place
Is no where whole, as writin clerkis wise;
What wondir is if soche one have no grace?
Eke wost thou how it fareth of some servise?
As plant a tre or herbe in sondrie wise,
And on the morowe pull it up as blive,
No wondir is though it maie nevir thrive.
And sith the god of Love hath the bestowed
In place digne unto thy worthinesse,
Stonde fast, for to a gode port hast thou rowed,
And of thy self for any hevinesse
Hope alwaie well; for but if drerinesse
Or ovirhast doe our bothe labour shende
I hope of this to makin a gode ende.

Digitized by Google

And woſt thou why? I am the laſſe afered
Of this matter with my nece for to trete,
For this have I herd ſaie of wiſe and lered,
Was nevir man or woman yet beyete
That was unapt to ſuffre lov'is hete
Celeſtiall, or ellis love of kinde;
Forthy ſome grace I hope in her to finde.
And for to ſpeke of her in ſpeciall,
Her beaute to bethinkin and her youthe,
It ſit her nought to ben celeſtiall
As yet, though that her bothè liſt and kouthe;
And truily it ſit her well right nouthe
A worthie knight to lovin and cherice,
And but ſhe doe I holde it for a vice.
Wherfore I am and woll be aie redy
To painin me to do you this ſervice,
For bothe of you to pleſin; this hope I
Hereaſtir wardis; for ye ben bothe wiſe,
And connin counſaile kepe in ſoche a wiſe
That no man ſhall the wiſir of it be;
And ſo we maie ben gladdid allè thre.
And by my trouth I have right now of the
A gode conceit in my wit as I geſſe,
And what it is I woll now that thou ſe;
I think that ſithin Love of his godeneſſe
Hath the convertid out of wickidneſſe
That thou ſhalt ben the beſtè poſt I leve
Of all his laie, and moſte his foin greve.

Digitized by Google

Enſample why, ſe now theſe gretè clerkes,
That errin aldirmoſte ayen all lawe,
And ben convertid from ther wickid werkes
Through grace of God, that left 'hem to him drawe,
Than arne thei folk that han moſt God in awe,
And ſtrengiſt faithid ben I undirſtonde,
And con an errour aldirbeſt withſtonde.
Whan Troilus had herde Pandare aſſented
To ben his helpe in loving of Creſeide
He wext of wo, as who ſaith unturmented,
But hottir wext his love; and than he ſaide
With ſobre chere, as though his herte yplaide,
Now blisfull Venus! helpe er that I ſterve.
Of the, Pandare, I now ſome thanke deſerve.
But, derè frende, how ſhal my wo be leſſe
Till this be done? and, gode now, tell me this,
How wolt thou ſaine of me and my diſtreſſe,
Leſt ſhe be wroth? this drede I moſt iwis,
Or wol not herin al how that it is:
Al this drede I, and eke for the manere
Of the her eme ſhe n'il no ſuche thing here.
(Quod Pandarus) Thou haſt a ful grete care
Leſt that the thorle may fal out of the mone.
Why, Lorde! I hate of the the nicè fare;
Why entremete of that thou haſt to done?
For Godd'is love I bidè the a bone;
So let me' alone, and it ſhal be thy beſt.
Why, frende, (quod he) than done right as the leſt:

Digitized by Google

But herke, Pandare, o worde, for I ne wolde
That thou in me wendiſt ſo grete folie
That to my lady I deſirin ſholde
That touchith harme or any vilanie,
For dredileſſe me were levir to die
Than ſhe of me aught ellis underſtode
But that that might yſownin into gode.
Tho lough this Pandare, and anon anſwerde,
And I thy borow'? fie! no wight doth but ſo:
I ne raught not although ſhe ſtode and herde
How that thou ſaieſt: but farewel, I wol go:
Adieu; be glad: God ſpede us bothè two!
Yeve me this labour and this buſineſſe
And of my ſpede be thine al the ſwetnes.
Tho Troilus on knees gan doune to fall,
(And Pandare in his armis hente him faſt)
And ſaide, Nowe ſie upon the Grekis all!
Yet parde God ſhal helpin at the laſt,
And dredileſſe if that my life may laſt,
And God toforme, lo! ſome of 'hem ſhal ſmerte;
And yet me'athinketh that this avaunt m'aſterte.
And now, Pandare, I can no more ſay,
But thou wiſe, thou woſt thou maiſt: thou art al;
My life, my deth, hole in thine honde I lay;
Helpe me. (quod he.) Yes, by my trouth I ſhal.
God yelde the, frende, and this in ſpecial,
(Quod Troiluſ) that thou me recommaunde
To her that may me to the deth commaunde.

This Pandarus tho, desirous to serve
His ful frendè, tho saide in this manere;
Farwel, and thinke I wol thy thanke deserve,
Have here my trouth, and that thou shalt well here:
And went his way thinking on this matere,
And how he best might her besethe of grace,
And find a lesure therto and a place.
For every wight that hath a house to found
He rennith nat the werke for to beginne
With rakil honde, but he wol bide a stound,
And sende his hert'is line out fro within,
Thus aldirfirst his purpose for to winne,
As this Pandarus in his hert'is thought
Did cast his werke full wisely er he wrought.
But Troilus lay tho no lengir doun,
But up anon gat upon his stede baie,
And in the felde he playid the lioun;
Wo was that Greke that with him met that daie:
And in the toune his manir tho forthe aie
So godely was, and gat him so in grace,
That eche him loved that lokid in his face.
For he becamin the most frendly wight,
The gentiliest, and eke the mostè fre,
The trustyiest, and one the bestè knight,
That in his time was or ellis might be:
Ded were his japis and his cruilte,
Ded his high porte and all his manir straunge,
And eche of 'hem gan for a vertue chaunge.

Digitized by Google

Now let us ſtint of Troilus a ſtounde,
That ſarith like a man that hurt is ſore,
And is ſomdele of aking of his wounde
Yleſſid wel, but helid no dele more,
And as an eſy pacient the lore
Abite of him that goth about his cure,
And thus he drivith forth his avinture.

Explicit liber primus.

PROŒMIUM LIBRI SECUNDI.

Out of theſe blacke wawis let us ſaile,
O winde, o winde! the wedir ginnith clere,
For in the ſe the bote hath ſuche travaile
Of my conning that unneth I it ſtere:
This ſe clepe I the tempeſtous matere
Of depe diſpaire that Troilus was in;
But now of hope the kalendis begin.

O lady mine, that callid art Clio!
Thou be my ſpede fro this forthe, and my Muſe,
To rime wel this Boke til I have do;
Me nedith here none othir art to uſe;
For why? to every lovir I me excuſe
That of no ſentiment I this endite,
But out of Latin in my tonge it write.

Wherfore I n'il have neithir thanke ne blame
Of all this Worke, but praie you mekily
Diſblamith me if any worde be lame,
For as mine auctour ſayid ſo ſay I;
Eke though I ſpeke of love unfelingly
No wondir is, for it nothinge of newe is:
A blinde man can not judgin wel in hewis.
I know eke that in forme of ſpeche is chaunge
Within a thouſande yere, and wordis tho
That haddin priſe now wondir nice and ſtraunge
Us thinkith 'hem, and yet thei ſpake 'hem ſo,
And ſpedde as wel in love as men now do;
Eke for to winnin love in ſondry ages
In ſondry londis ſondry ben uſages.
And forthy if it happe in any wiſe
That here be any lover in this place
That herkeneth, as the ſtory wol deviſe,
How Troilus came to his ladie's grace,
And thinkith ſo n'olde I not love purchace,
Or wondrith on his ſpeche or his doyng,
I n'ot, but it is to me no wondring:
For every wight whiche that to Rome ywent
Halt nat o pathe ne alway o manere;
Eke in ſome londe were al the game yſhent
Yf that men fande in love as men don here,
As thus, in opin doyng or in chere,
In viſiting, in forme, or ſaid our fawes;
For thus men ſaine, *Eche countre hath his lawes.*

Digitized by Google

Eke ſcarſely ben there in this placè thre
That have in love ſaid like and done in al,
For to this purpoſe this maie likin the,
And thè right nought, yet al is done or ſhal;
Eke ſome men grave in tre, ſome in ſtone wal,
As it betide: but ſith I have begonne,
Mine authour ſhall I ſolow as I konne. 49

Explicit Proœmium.

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

In May, that mothir is of monethis glade,
That the freſhe flouris all, blew, white, and rede,
Ben quicke ayen that wintir ded had made,
And full of bäume is fleting every mede,
Whan that Phœbus doth his bright bemis ſpred
Right in the white Bole, right ſo it betidde,
As I ſhal ſinge, on May'is day the thridde, 56
That Pandarus, for all his wiſè ſpeche,
Felte eke his parte of Lov'is ſhottis kene,
That coude he ner ſo well of loving preche
It made his hewe al daie ful oftin grene;
So ſhope it that him fill that day a tene
In love for whiche in wo to bedde he went,
And made er it were day full many' a went. 63

Digitized by Google

The ſwalow Progne with a ſorowfull lay,
Whan morow come, gan make her waimenting
Why ſhe forſhapin was; and ever lay
Pandare abed halfe in a ſlombering,
Til ſhe ſo nigh him made her waimenting,
How Tereus gan forth her ſuſtir take,
That with the noiſe of her he gan awake,
And to call, and dreſſin him up to riſe,
Remembring him his arande was to done
From Troilus, and eke his grete empriſe,
And caſt, and knew in gode plite was the mone
To done voiage, and toke his way full ſone
Unto his nec'is paleis there beſide:
Now Janus, god of Entre, thou him gide!
Whan he was come unto his nec'is place,
Where is my lady, to her folke (quod he?)
And thei him tolde, and he forthe in gan pace,
And founde two othir ladies ſit and ſhe
Within a pavid parlour, and thei thre
Herdin a maidin 'hem redin the geſte:
Of the ſiege of Thebis whilis 'hem leſte,
Madame, quod Pandare, God you ſave and ſe,
With al your boke and al the companie!
Eighe! uncle mine, welcome iwis, (quod ſhe)
And up ſhe roſe, and by the honde in hie
She toke him faſt, and ſayid, This night thrye,
To gode mote it yturne, of you I mette;
And with that word ſhe doun on benche him ſet.

Digitized by Google

Ye, nece, ye shullin farin wel the bet,
If God wol, al this yere, (quod Pandarus)
But I am sory that I have you let
To herkin of your boke ye praisin thus:
For Godd'is love what saith it? tel it us:
Is it of love? some gode ye may me lere.
Uncle, (quod she) your maistresse is nat here.
With that they gonnin laugh, and tho she seide,
This romaunce is of Thebis that we rede,
And we have herd how that King Laius deide
Through Oedipus his sonne, and all the dede;
And here we stintin at these letters rede
How the bishop, as the boke can ytell,
Amphiorax, fill through the grounde to hell.
(Quod Pandarus) All this know I my selve,
And al th' assege of Thebis and the care,
For herof ben there makid bokis twelve:
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare:
Do' way your habe, and shew your face bare;
Do' way your labe: rise up and let us daunce,
And let us done to May some observaunce.
Eighe! God forbid! (quod she.) What! be ye mad?
Is that a widowe's life, so God you save?
Parde you makin me right sore adrad;
Ye bene so wilde it semith as ye rave:
It sat me wel better ate in a cave
To bide, and rede on holy saintis lives;
Let maidins gon to daunce and yonge wives.

Digitized by Google

As evir thrive I (quod this Pandarus)
Yet coulde I tel a thing to don you play.
Now uncle dere (quod she) tellith it us
For Godd is love: is than th'assiege aweie?
I am of Grekis ferde so that I deie.
Nay, nay, (quod he) as evir mote I thrive
It is a thing wel bettir than suche five.
Ye, holy God! (quod she) what thing is that?
What! bettir than suche five? Eighe! nay iwis
For al this world ne can I redin what
It should yben: some jape I trowe it is;
And but your selvin tel us what it is
My wit is for to'arede it al to lene:
As helpe me God I n'ot what that ye mene.
And I your borow; ne ner shal (quod he)
This thing be tolde to you, as mote I thrive.
And why so, uncle mine, why so? (quod she.)
By God (quod he) that wol I tel as blive,
For proudir woman is there none on live,
And ye it wiste, in al the toune of Troie:
I ne jape nat, so evir have I joie.
Tho gan she to wondrin more than before
A thousande folde, and doune her eyin cast;
For nevir sithe the time that she was bore
To knowin thing desirid she so fast,
And with a sike she said him at the last,
Now, uncle mine, I n'il you not displese,
Nor askin that that may do you disese.

Digitized by Google

So aftir this with many wordis glade
And frendly talis, and with mery chere,
Of this and that thei ſpeke, and gonnin wade
In many an unkouth, glad, and depe, matere,
As frendis done whan thei hen met ifere,
Til ſhe gan aſkin him how Hector ferde,
That was the toun'is wal and Grekis yerde.

Ful wel, I thanke it God, ſaide Pandarus,
Save in his arme he hath a litle wounde;
And eke his frethe brothir Troilus,
To the wiſe worthy Hector the ſecounde,
In whom that every vertue liſte habounde,
As allè trouthe and allè gentilneſſe,
Wiſedome, honour, fredome, and worthineſſe.

In gode faith, eme, (quod ſhe) that likith me
Thei farin wel; God ſave 'hem bothè two!
For trewliche I holde it a grete deinte
A king'is ſonne in armis wel to do,
And be of godè condicions therto,
For grete powir and moral vertue here
Is ſelde iſene in one perſone ifere.

In gode faith that is ſothe, (quod Pandarus)
But by my trouth the king hath ſonnis twey,
That is to mene Hector and Troilus,
That certainly though that I ſhould ydey
Thei ben as voide of vicis, dare I ſey,
As any men that livin undir ſonne;
Ther might is wide iknow and what thei conne.

Of Hector nedith nothing for to tel;
In all this worlde there n'is a bettir knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse the wel,
And he wel more of vertue hath than might,
This knowith many' a wise and worthy knight:
And the same prise of Troilus I sey:
God helpe me so I know not suche twey.
Parde (quod she) of Hector that is sothe,
And of Troilus the same thing trowe I,
For dredilesse men tellith that he dothe
In armis day by day so worthily,
And berith him here at home so gently
To every wight, that al prise hath he
Of them that me were leviste praisid be.
Ye say right sothe iwis, (quod Pandarus)
For yesterday who so had with him ben
Mightin have wondrid upon Troilus,
For nevir yet so thicke a swarme of been
Ne flewe as Grekis from him gannin sheen,
And through the felde in every wightis ere
There was no crie but Troilus is there!
Now here now there he huntid 'hem so fast
There n'as but Grekis blode and Troilus;
Now him he hurt, and him al doun he cast;
Aye where he went it was arrayid thus:
He was ther deth, and shelde and life for us,
That as that day ther durst him none withstonde
While that he helde his blody swerde in honde.

Therto he is the frendilyiſt man
Of gret eſtate that er I ſawe my live,
And where him liſte the beſt felowſhip cân
To ſuche as him thinkith able to thrive:
And with that word tho Pandarus as blive
He toke his leve, and ſaid I wol gon hen.
Nay, blame have I, myne uncle, (quod ſhe) then.
What eilith you to be thus wery ſone,
And namiliche of women wol ye ſo?
Naie, ſittith doune; parde I have to done
With you to ſpeke of wiſdome er ye go;
And every wight that was about 'hem tho
That herdè that gan ferre awaie to ſtonde,
While thei two had al that 'hem liſte in honde.
Whan that her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her eſtate and of her governaunce,
(Quod Pandarus) Now time is that I wende,
But yet I ſay Ariſith, let us daunce
And caſte your widowe's habite to miſchaunce;
What liſte you thus your ſelfe to diſfigure,
Sithe you is tidde ſo glad an avinture?
But wel bethought; for love of God (quod ſhe)
Shal I nat wetin what ye mene of this?
No, this thing aſkith leſir tho (quod he)
And eke it me would full muche greve iwis
If I it tolde and ye it toke amis:
Yet were it bette my tonge to holdin ſtil
Than ſay a ſothe that were ayenſt your wil.

Digitized by Google

For, nece myne, by the goddesse Minerve,
And Jupiter, that makith the thonde'ring,
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
Ye ben the woman in this world living,
Withoutin paramours, to my weting,
That I best love, and lothist am to greve,
And that ye wetin wel your selfe I leve.
Iwis, mine uncle, (quod she) graunt mercy!
Your frendship have I foundin evir yet;
I am to no man beholdin trewly
So muche as you, and have so litil quit;
And with the grace of God emforth my wit
As in my gilte I shal you ner offende,
And if I have er this I wol amende.
But for the love of God I you beseche,
As ye be he that I love most and triste,
Let be to me your fremid manir speche,
And saie to me your nece what so you list.
And with that worde her uncle' anon her kist,
And sayid, Gladly, my leve nece so dere!
Take it for gode that I shal say you here.
With that she gan her eyin doune to caste,
And Pandarus in coughe began a lite,
And sayid, Nece, alway, lo! to the laste,
How so it be that some men 'hem delite
With subtil art ther talis for t' endite,
Yet for al that in ther entencion
Ther tale is all for some conclusion.

Digitized by Google

And ſithe the end is every tal'is ſtrength,
And this matir is ſo behovily,
What ſhould I paint or drawin it on length
To you that ben my frende ſo faithfully?
And with that worde he gan right inwardly
Beholdin her, and lokin in her face,
And ſaide, On ſuche a mirrour muche gode grace!
Than thought he thus, if I my tale endite
Ought harde, or make a proceſſe any while,
She ſhal no ſavour have therin but lite,
And trowe I would her in my wil begile,
For tendir wittis wenin al be wile
Wher as thei con nat plainliche undirſtond;
Forthy her wit to ſounin wol I fonde;
And lokid on her in a beſy wiſe,
And ſhe was ware that he behelde her ſo:
Ah, Lorde! (quod ſhe) ſo faſte ye me aviſe,
Sawe ye me ner er now? what, ſay ye no?
Yes, yes, (quod he) and bet wol er I go;
But by my trouth I thoughtin nowe if ye
Be fortunate, for now men ſhal it ſe.
For every wight ſome godely avinture
Somtime is ſhape, if he it can receive,
But if that he n'il take of it no cure
When that it cometh, but wilfully it weive,
Lo, neither caſe nor Fortune him deceive,
But right his ownè ſlouth and wretchidneſſe;
And ſuche a wight is for to blame I geſſe.

Digitized by Google

Gode avinture, o bellè nece! have ye
Ful lightly foundin, and ye conne it take;
And for the love of God and eke of me
Catche it anone, leſt avinture yſlake:
What ſhould I lengir proceſſe of it make?
Yeve me your hond, for in this world is none,
If that you liſt, a wight ſo wel begon.
And ſithe I ſpeke of gode entencioun,
As I to you have tolde wel here beforne,
And love as wel your honour and renoun
As any cretuve in the worlde iborne,
By al the othis that I have you ſworne
And ye be wrothe therfore, or wene I lie,
Ne ſhal I never ſene you efte with eie.
Beth nat agaſte, ne quakith nat; wherto?
Ne chaungith nat for ferè ſo your hewe,
For hardily the worſt of this is do;
And though my tale as now be to you newe,
Yet truſt alwaie ye ſhal me findin trewe;
And were it thing that me thought unfitting
To you ne would I no ſuch talis bring.
Nowe, my gode eme, for Godd'is love I pray
(Quod ſhe) come of and tel me what it is,
For bothe I am agaſt what ye wol ſay,
And eke me longith it to wit iwis,
For whethir it be wel or be amis
Say on; let me not in this fere ydwel.
So wol I done: now herkenith I ſhal tel.

Digitized by Google

Now nece mine, the king'is owne dere ſonne,
The gode, the wiſe, the worthy, freſh and fre,
Whiche alway for to done wel is his wonne,
The noble Troilus, ſo lowith the
That but ye helpe it wol his bane ybe.
Lo! here is al: what ſhouldin I more ſey?
Doth what you liſt to make him live or dey.
But if ye let him dye I wol ſtervin,
Have here my trouthe, nece, I n'il not lien,
Al ſhould I with this knife my throte kervin:
With that the teris burſt out of his eyen,
And ſaide, If that ye done us both to dien
Thus giltileſſe, than have ye filthid faire;
What mendeth it you though that we both apaire!
Alas! he whiche that is my lorde ſo dere,
That trewe man, that noble gentle knight,
That naught deſirith but your frendly chere,
I ſe him dyin, there he goth upright,
And haſtith him with al his fulle might
For to ben ſlaine, if his fortune aſſente:
Alas that God you ſuche a beaute ſente!
If it be ſo that ye ſo cruil be
That of his deth you liſtith nought to retch,
That is ſo trewe and worthy as we ſe,
No more than of a japir or a wretch,
If ye be ſuche, your beaute may nat ſtretch
To make amendes of ſo cruill a dede;
Aviſement is gode before the nede.

Wo worthe the faire gemme that is vertuleſſe!
Wo worthe that herbe alſo that doth no bote!
Wo worth the beaute that is routheleſſe!
Wo worth that wight that trede eche undir fote!
And ye that ben of beaute croppe and rote,
If therwithalin you ne be no routhe
Than is it hadme ye livin, by my trouthe.
And alſo thinke wel that this is no gaude,
For me were levir thou, and I, and he,
Were hougid than that I ſhould ben his baude,
As high as men might on us al ſe:
I am thine eme; the ſhame were unto me
As wel as the if that I ſhould aſſent
Through mine abet that he thine honour ſhent.
Now undirſtonde, for I you nought require
To binde you to him thurough no behoſt
Save one, that ye makin him bettir chere
Than ye han doner this and more feſte,
So that his life be ſavid at the leſte.
This al and ſome is plainly our entente:
God helpe me ſo I nevir othir mente.
Lo! this requeſt is nought but ſkil iwis,
Ne doute of reſon parde is there none:
I ſet the worſt that ye dredin; this is,
Men would wondir to ſene him come and gone:
Ther ayeniſt anſwere I thus anone,
That every wight, but he be ſole of kinde,
Wol deme it love of frendſhip in his minde.

Digitized by Google

What! who wol demin though he se a man
To temple gon that he th' imagis eteth?
Thinke eke howe wel and wisely that he can
Governe himselfe, that he nothing foryeteth,
That wher he cometh he pris and thonk him geteth;
And eke therto he shal come hereso selde
What force were it though all the toun beheldè? 378
Suche love of frendes reignith in al this toun:
And wrie you in that mantil evirmore.
And God so wis be my salvacioun
As I have saide your best is to do so.
But, gode neee, alway for to stint his wo
So let your daungir sugrid ben alite
That of his deth ye be not al to wite. 385
Creseidè, which that herde him in this wise,
Thought I shal sele what he menith iwis.
Now eme, (quod she) what wouldin ye devise?
What is your rede that I should done of this?
That is wel said, quod he: certaine best is
That ye him love aien for his loving,
As love for love is skilful guerdoning. 392
Thinke eke how elde wastith every hour
In eche of you a part of your beaute,
And therfore er that age doth the devour
Go love, for olde there woll no wight love the.
Let this proverbe a lore unto you be,
To late iwarè, quod Beaute, whan it passe,
And elde ydauntith daungir at the lasse. 399

Digitized by Google

The king's fole is wont to crie aloude,
Whan that he thinketh a woman bereth her hie,
So longè mote ye livin, and all proude,
Til crow's fete growin undir your eie,
And ſende you than a mirrour in to prie
In which that ye may ſe your face a morrowe:
Nece, I bid him within you no more ſorowe.
With this he ſtinte, and caſt adoune the hed,
And ſhe began to breſt and wepe anone,
And ſaide, Alas for wo! why n'ere I ded?
For of this world the faith it al agone:
Alas! what ſhuldin ſtraunge unto me done
When he that for my beſtè frende I wende
Redith me love who ſhuldè it me defende?
Alas! I would have truſtid doutiles
That if that I through my diſavinture
Had lovid eithir him or Achilles,
Hector, or any othir manir creture,
Ye n'old have had no mercy ne meſure
On me, but alwaie had me in repreve:
This falſe worldè, alas! who may it leve?
What! is this al the joy and al the feſt?
Is this your rede? is this my blisful caas?
Is this the very mede of your beheſt?
Is this al paintid proceſſe ſaid (alas!)
Right for this fine? O lady mine Pallas,
Thou in this dredeful caſe for me purvey,
For ſo aſtonied am I that I dey.

Digitized by Google

With that she gan ful sorowfully to sike:
Ah! may it be no bet? (Quod Pandarus)
By God I shall no more come here this weke,
And God to-forne, that am mistrustid thus;
I se wel now ye settin lite of us
Or of our deth, alas! I, woful wretche,
Might he yet live of me were nought to retche.
O cruil god of Deth, dispitous Marte!
O Furies thre of hell on you I crie,
So let me ner out of this house departe
Yf that I ment or harme or vilanie;
But sithe I se my lorde mote nedis die,
And I with him, here I me shrive, and sey,
That wickidly ye done us both to dey.
But sithe it likith you that I be ded, now
By Neptunus, that god is of the Se,
Fro this forthe shal I nevir etin bred
Til that I mine own hert's blode mine se,
For certaine I wol die as sone as he:
And up he sterte, and on his way he raught,
Til she againe him by the lappe yraught.
Creseidè, which that wel nigh starke for sere,
So as she was ay the most ferefull wight
That might in be, and herde eke with herere,
And sawe the sorowful ernest of the knight,
And in his prayir sawe eke non non right,
And for the harme eke that might fallin more,
She gan to rewe, and dredde her wondir sore:

And thus ſhe thought; unhappis fallin thicke
Al day for love, and in ſuche manir caas
As men ben cruill in 'hem ſelfe and wicke;
And if this man ſle here himſelfe, alas!
In my preſence, it n'il be no ſolas:
What men would of it deme I can nat ſay;
It nedith me full ſlighly for to play.
And with a ſorowful ſighe ſhe ſaide thrie,
Ah, Lorde! me is betidde a ſory chaunce,
For mine eſtate lieth in a jeopardie,
And eke mine em'is life lieth in balaunce;
But nathèleſſe with Godd'is governaunce
I ſhal ſo done mine honour ſhal I kepe,
And eke his life, and ſtintin for to wepe.
Of harmis two the leſſe is for to cheſe;
Yet had I levir makin him gode chere
In honour than mine em'is life to leſe;
Ye ſaine ye nothing ellis me requere.
No, wis, (quod he) *mine* owne nece ſo dère!
Now wel, (quod ſhe) and I wol don my paine;
I ſhal mine herte ayen my luſt conſtraine.
But that I n'il nat holdin him in honde,
Ne love a man, that can I naught ne may,
Ayenſt my wil, but ellis wol I fonde,
Mine honour ſave, plese him fro day to day;
Therto n'olde I not onis have ſaide nay
But that I dredde as in my fantaſie;
But *Ceſſe cauſe and aie ceſſith maladie.*

Digitized by Google

But here I make a protestacion
That in this processe if ye depir go
That certainly for no salvacion
Of you, though that ye stervin bothe two,
Though al the worlde on o day be my fo,
Ne shal I ner on him have othir routhe.
I graunt it wel (quod Pandare) by my trouthe.
But maie I trustin welle to you (quod he)
That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holdin truely unto me?
Ye, doutilesse, quod she, myne uncle dere!
Ne that I shall have cause in this matere
(Quod he) to plain or astir you to preche?
Why no, parde; what nedith more spèche!
Tho sellin thei in othir talis glade,
Till at the last, O gode emè! (quod she tho)
For love of God, whiche that us bothe made,
Telle me how first ye wistin of his wo;
Wot noh of it but ye? He sayid No.
Can he well speke of love, (quod she) I preie?
Tell me, for it the bet shall me purveie.
Tho Pandarus a litil gan to smile,
And sayid, By my trouth I shall now tell:
This othir daie, nat gon full longe while,
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I well halfe a daie to dwell,
Right for to spekin of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekis might in distraunce;

Sone after that begone we for to lepe
And caſtin with our dartis to and fro,
Till at the laſt he ſayid he would ſlepe,
And on the graſſe adoune he laied him tho;
And I aftir gan romin to and fro,
Till that I herd, as I walkid alone,
How he began full wofully to grone.
Tho gan I ſtalke him full ſoftly behinde,
And ſikirly, the ſothe for to ſaine,
As I can clepe ayen now to my minde,
Right thus to Love he gan him for to plaine:
He ſayid, Lorde, have routh upon my paine,
All have I ben rebell in mine entent,
Now (*mea culpa*) Lorde, I me repent.
O God! that at thy diſpoſicion
Lediſt forth the ſine by juſt purveiaunce
Of every wight, my lowe confeſſion
Accept in gre, and ſende me ſoche penaunce
As likith the; put from me diſperaunce,
That maie my ghoſt departe alwaie fro the:
Thou be my ſhilde for thy benignite.
For certis, Lorde, ſo ſore hath ſhe me wounded
That ſtode in blacke with loking of her eyen,
That to mine hert'is botome it is founded,
Through which I wot that I muſt nedis dien;
This is the werſt, I dare me nought bewrien,
And well the botir ben the gledis rede
That men 'hem wrien with aſhin pale and ded.

With that he ſmote his hedde adoune anone,
And gan to muttre I nat what truely,
And I with that gan ſtill awaie to gone,
And lete thereof as nothing wiſt had I,
And come again anon and ſtode him by,
And ſaied, Awake, ye ſlepin all to long;
It ſemith me nought that Love doth you wrong
That ſlepin ſo that no man maie you wake;
Who ſeie evir er this ſo dull a man?
Ye, frende, (quod he) doe ye your hedd'is ake
For love, and let me livin as I can: . . . . .
But though that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as freſhe a countenaunce
As though he ſhould have led the newè daunce.
This paſſid forth till now this othir daie
It fell that I come roming all alone:
Into his chambre, and founde how that he laie
Upon his bedde; but man ſo ſorè grone.
Ne herd I nevir; and what was his mone
Ne wiſt I nought, for as I was comming
All ſodainly he left his complaining,
Of whiche I toke ſomwhat ſuſpection,
And nere I come, and founde him wepè ſore;
And God ſo wiſe be my ſalvacion
As I had nevir routhe of nothing more,
For neithir with engine ne with no lore
Unnethis might I fro the deth him kepe,
That yet fele I mine hertè for him wepe.

Digitized by Google

And God wot nevir sith that I was borne
Was I so busie no man for to preche,
Ne nevir was to wight so depe yswore,
Er he me told who might yben his leche;
But not to you, rehersin al his speche,
Or all his wofull wordis for to towne,
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll se me swone;
But for to save his life, and ellis nought,
And to non harm of you, thus am I driven;
And for the love of God that us hath wrought
Soche chere him doth that he and I maie liven.
Now have I plat to you mine herte yshriven,
And sith ye wote that mine entent is clene
Take hede thereof, for none evill I mene.
And right gode thrift I pray to God have ye
That han soche one icaught withoutin net;
And be ye wife, as ye be faire to se;
Well in the ring than is the rubie set:
There wernin nevir two so well imet
Whan ye ben his all whole as he is your:
The mighty God us grant to se that hour!
Naie, thereof spake I nat. A ha! (quod she)
As helpe me God ye shendin every dele.
A, mercie, dere nece! anon (quod he)
What so I spake I ment it nought but wele,
By Mars the god that helmid is of stele:
Now beth not wroth, my blode, my nece dere!
Now well (quod she) foryevin be it here.

With this he toke his leve, and home he went:
Ye, Lorde, how he was glad and well bigon!
Creſeide aroſe, no lengir ſhe ne ſtent,
But ſtreight into her cloſet went anon,
And ſet her doune as ſtill as any ſtone,
And every worde gan up and doune to winde
That he had ſaied as it came her to minde.
And woxe ſomedele aſtonied in her thought
Right for the newè caſe; but whan that ſhe
Was full aviſid, tho found ſhe right nought
Of perill why that ſhe oughte aferde be,
For man mai love of poſſibilite
A woman ſo that his herte maie to breſt,
And ſhe nat love ayen but if her leſt.
But as ſhe ſat alone and thoughtè thus,
In field aroſe a ſkirmiſh all without,
And men cried in the ſtrete, Se! Troilus
Hath right now put to flight the Grekis rout:
With that gonne all her meine for to ſhout,
A! go we ſe; caſt up the gatis wide,
For through this ſtrete he mote to paleis ride,
For othir waie is fro the yatis none
Of Dardanus, there opin is the cheine:
With that come he and all his folke anone
An eſie pace riding in routis tweine,
Right as his happie daie was (ſothe to ſeine)
For whiche men ſaith maie not diſtourbid bè
That ſhall betidin of neceſſite.

Digitized by Google

This Troilus ſat on his baiè ſtede
All armid ſave his hedde full richily,
And woundid was his horſe, and gan to blede,
On whiche he rode a pace full ſoftily;
But ſoche a knightly ſight, lo! truily
As was on him was nat withoutin faile
To loke on Mars, that god is of Battaile.
So like a man of armis and a knight
He was to ſene, fulfilled of high proweſſe,
For bothe he had a bodie and a might
To doen that thing as well as hardineſſe,
And eke to ſene him in his gerè dreſſe,
So freſhe, ſo yong, ſo weldy, ſemid he,
It was an hevin on him for to ſe.
His helme to hewin was in twentie places,
That by a tiſſue hong his backe behinde,
His ſhelde to daſhed with ſwerdis and with maces,
In whiche men might many an arowe finde
That thirlid had both horne, and nerfe, and rinde;
And aie the peple cried, Here cometh our joie,
And next his brothir holdir up of Troie!
For which he wext a little redde for ſhame
When he ſo herd the peple on him crien,
That to beholde it was a noble game
How ſobirliche he caſt adoune his eyen.
Creſeide anone gan all his chere eſpien,
And let it in her herte ſo ſoftly ſinke
That to her ſelf ſhe ſayed, Ho! give me drinke.

For of her owne thought she wore al redde,
Remembring her right thus, lo! this is he
Whiche that mine uncle swereth he mote be dedde
But I on him have mercie and pite:
And with that ilke thought for pure shame she
Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as fast,
While he and all the peple forth by past:
And gan to cast and rollin up and doun
Within her thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estate, and also his renoun,
His witte, his shape, and eke his gentilnesse;
But moste her favour was for his distresse
Was all for her, and thought it were a routh
To slaen soche one, if that he mente trouth.
Now might some envious wight janglin thus,
This was a sodain love; how might it be
That she so lightly lovid Troilus?
Right at the first sight of him? Yea, parde.
Now whoso saied so mote he nevir the,
For every thing a ginning hath it nede
Er all be wrought withoutin any drede.
For I saie nat that she so sodainly
Yafe him her love, but that she gan encline
To liken' him tho, and I have told you why;
And aftir that his manhode and his pine
Made love within her herte for to mine,
For whiche by proceste and by gode servise
He wanne her love, and in no sodain wise.

Digitized by Google

And alſo blisful Venus wele arayed
Satte in her ſeyinth houſe of hevin tho
Diſpoſid wele, and with aſpectis payed,
To helpin ſely Troylus of his wo;
And, ſothe to ſayne, ſhe n'as nat all a foe
To Troylus in hys natyvyte,
God wote that wele the ſonir ſpedin he.
Now let us ſtinte of Troilus a throwe,
That ridith forth, and let us tournè faſt
Unto Creſeide, that heng her hedde full lowe
There as ſhe ſatte alone, and gan to caſt
Wheron ſhe would apoinct her at the laſt,
If it ſo were her eme ne would yceſſe
For Troilus upon her for to preſſe.
And, Lorde! ſo ſhe gan in her thought argue
In this matter of whiche I have you told,
And what to doen beſt were, and what eſchue,
That plitid ſhe ful oft in many fold;
Now was her hertè warme now was it cold;
And what ſhe thought of ſomwhat ſhal I write
As mine auctbour liſtith to me t' endite.
She thought wele firſt that Troilus perſon
She knewe by ſight, and eke his gentilneſſe,
And thus ſhe ſaid, All were it nought to doen
To graunt him love, yet for his worthineſſe
It wer honor with plaie and with gladneſſe
In honeſte with ſuche a lorde to dele
For mine eſtate and alſo for his hele.

Digitized by Google

Eke well wote I my king's sonne is he,
And sith he hath to se me soche delite,
If I would utterliche his sight yflie
Par'aventure he might have me in dispite,
Thorough whiche I might stondin in worse plite;
Now were I not wise me hate to purchace,
Withoutin nede, there I maie stand in grace.
In every thing I wot there lieth mesure;
For though a man forbiddith dronkinesse,
He nought forbiddith that every creture
Be drinkelesse for alwaie, as I gesse;
Eke sithe I wot for me is his distresse
I ne ought not for that thing him dispise,
Sith it is so he menith in gode wise.
And eke I knowe of longe time agone
His thewis gode, and that he n'is not nice,
No vanteur faine men certain he is none,
To wise is he to doen so grete a vice,
Ne als I n'ill him nevir so cherice
That he shall make avaunt by juste cause;
He shall me nevir binde in soche a clause.
Now set a case, the hardist is iwis,
Men might in demin that he lovith me;
What dishonour were it unto me this?
Maie I him let of that? why naie, parde;
I knowe also, and alwaie here and se,
Men lovin women al this toure about;
Be thei the wers? why naie, withoutin doubt.

I thinke eke how he worthy is to have
Of all this noble toune the thriftyiſt
That woman is, if ſhe her honour ſave,
For out and out he is the worthyiſt
Save only Hector, whiche that is the beſt;
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure:
But ſoche is love, and eke mine avinture.
Ne me to love a wondir is it nought,
For well wote I my ſelf, ſo God me ſpede,
All woll I that no man wiſt of this thought,
I am one of the fairiſt out of drede,
And godelyiſt, who ſo that takith hede,
And ſo men ſaine, in all the toune of Troie;
What wondir is though he of me have joie?
I am mine ownè woman, well at eſe,
I thanke it God, as aftir mine eſtate,
Right yong, and ſtond untied in luſtie leſe,
Withoutin jelouſie, and ſoche debate;
Shall no huſbonde ſaine unto me Checke mate,
For eithir thei ben full of jelouſie,
Or maiſtirfull, or lovin novelrie.
What ſhall I doen? to what fine live I thus?
Shall I not love in caſe if that me leſt?
What? pardieux I am not religious;
And though that I mine hertè ſet at reſt
Upon this knight, that is the worthieſt,
And kepe alwaie mine honor and my name,
By all right it maie doe to me no ſhame.

Digitized by Google

But right as whan the ſunnè ſhineth bright
In March, that chaungith oftintime his face,
And that a cloud is put with winde to flight
Whiche ovirſprat the ſunne as for a ſpace,
A cloudy thought gan throngh her ſoulè pace
That ovirſpradde her brightè thoughtis all,
So that for fere almoſte ſhe gan to fall.

That thought was this; Alas! ſith I am fre
Should I now love and put in jeopardie
My ſikirneſſe, and thrallin liberte?
Alas! how durſt I thinkin that folie?
Maie I not well in othir folke aſpie
Ther dredfull joie, ther conſtreint and ther pain?
Ther lovith non that ne hath why to plain.

For love is yet the moſtè ſtormie life
Right of himſelf that evir was begonne,
For ever ſome miſtruſt or ſome nice ſtrife
There is in love, ſome cloud ovir the ſunne;
Thereto we wretchid women nothing conne
Whan us is wo but wepe, and ſit, and thinke:
Our wretche is this, our ownè wo to drinke.

Alſo thefe wickid tonguis ben ſo preſt
To ſpeke us harme, eke men ben ſo untrue,
That right anon as ceſſid is ther leſt
So ceſſith love, and forth to love anewe:
But *Harme idoe is doen, who ſo it rue;*
For though theſe men for love hem firſt to rende,
Full ſharp beginning brekith oft at ende.

How oftin time hath it yknowin ben
The treſon that to women hath be doe!
To what fine is ſoche love I can not ſene,
Or where becomith it whan it is go
There is no wight that wote I trowè ſo;
Wher it becometh lo no wight on it ſporneth;
That erſt was nothing into nothing turneth.
How buſie (if I love) eke muſt I be
To pleſin 'hem that jangle' of love and deme,
And coyen 'hem that thei ſaie no harm of me!
For though there be no cauſe yet 'hem may ſeme
Al be for harme that folke ther frendis queme;
And who maie ſtoppin every wiekid tong
Or ſoune of bellis while that thei ben rong?
And after that her thought gan for to clere,
And ſaied, *He whiche that nothing undirtaketh*
Nothing achevith, be him loth or dere;
And with an othir thought her hert yquaketh;
Than ſlepith hope, and aftir drede awaketh;
Now hote now cold: but thus betwixin twey
She riſt her up and went her for to pley.
Adoune the ſtaire anon right tho ſhe went
Into her gardine, with her necis thre,
And up and doun thei madin many' a went
Flexippe' and ſhe, Tarbe' and Antigone,
To playin, that it joiè was to ſe,
And othir of her women a grete rout
Her folowed in the gardine all about.

Digitized by Google

This yerde was large, and railed al the aleyes,
And ſhadowed wel with blos'omy bowis grene,
And benchid newe, and ſondid all the weyes,
In whiche ſhe walkith arme in arme betwene,
Till at the laſt Antigone the ſhene
Gan on a Trojan ſong to ſingin clere,
That it an hevin was her voice to here.
She ſaied, O Love! to whom I have and ſhal
Ben humble ſubject, true in mine entent,
As I beſt can to you, Lorde, yeve I all
For evirmore mine hert'is love to rent,
For nevir yet thy grace to no wight ſent
So blisfull cauſe as me, my life to lede
In allè joie and ſuretie out of drede.
The blisfull God hath me ſo well beſet
In love iwis, that all that berith life
Imaginin ne could how to be bet;
For, Lorde, withoutin jelouſie or ſtrife
I love one whiche that moſte is ententife
To ſervin well, unwerily' or unfained,
That evir was, and leſt with harme diſtained,
As he that is the well of worthineſſe,
Of trouth the ground, mirrour of godelihedde,
Of wit Apollo, ſtone of ſikirneſſe,
Of virtue rote, of luſte findir and hedde,
Thorough whiche is all ſorowe fro me dedde:
Iwis I love him beſt, ſo doeth he me;
Now gode thrift have he where ſo er he be!

Digitized by Google

Whom ſhould I thankin but you, god of Love,
Of all this bliſſe in whiche to bathe I ginne?
And thankid be ye, Lorde, for that I love:
This is the rightè life that I am inne,
To flemin all manir of vice and ſinne;
This doeth me ſo to vertue for to' entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende.
And who that ſaieth that for to love is vice
Or thraldome, though he fele in it diſtreſſe,
He either is envious or right nice,
Or is unmightie for his ſhreudèneſſe
To lovin; for ſoche manir folke I geſſe
Diffamin Love as nothing of him knowe;
They ſpeke of Love, but nevir bent his bowe.
What is the ſunnè worſe of his kinde right
Though that a man for febleſſe of his eyen
Maie not endure on it to ſe for bright?
Or love the worſe that wretchis on it crien?
No wele is worth that maie no ſorowe drien;
And forthy; *Who that hath an hedde of verre*
Fro caſt of ſtonis ware him in the werre.
But I with al mine herte and al my might,
As I have ſaied, woll love unto my laſt
My owne dere herte, and all mine ownè knight,
In whiche mine herte ygrowin is ſo faſt,
And his in me, that it ſhall evir laſt:
All did I dred at firſt to love begin
Now wote I well there is no pain therein.

Digitized by Google

And of her ſong right with that worde ſhe ſtent,
And therewithall, Now necè (quod Creſeide)
Who made this ſong now with ſo gode entent?
Antigone anſwerde anon, and ſaide,
Madame, iwis it was the godelyiſt maide,
Of-grete eſtate, in all the toune of Troie,
Who led her life in moſte honour and joie.
Forſothe ſo it yſemith by her ſong,
Quod tho Creſeide, and gan therwith to ſike,
And ſayid, Lorde! is there ſoche bliſſe emong
Theſe lovirs, as thei can ſo faire endite?
Ye, wiſſe, quod freſhe Antigone the white,
For all the folke that have or ben on live
Ne couldin well the bliſſe of love diſcrive.
But wenin ye that every wretche wote
The parfite bliſſe of love? why naie, iwis;
Thei wenin all be love if one be hote;
Do' waie, do' waie! thei wote nothing of this:
Men mote aſkin of ſainctis if it is
Ought faire in heven? and why? for thei can tell;
And aſkin fendes if it be foule in hell?
Creſeide unto the purpoſe nought anſwerde,
But ſaied, Iwis it woll be night as ſaſte;
But every worde whiche that ſhe of her herde
She gan to printin in her hertè faſte,
And aie gan love her laſſe for to agaſte
Than' it did erſt, and ſinkin in her herte,
That ſhe was ſomwhat able to converte.

The day'is honour and the heven'is eye,
The night'is foe, all this clepe I the ſonne,
Gan weſtrin faſt, and dounward for to wrie,
As he that had his day'is courſe ironne,
And white thingis woxin all dimme and donne
For lacke of light, and ſterris for to' apere,
That ſhe and all her folke in went ifere.
So whan it likid her to gon to reſte,
And voidid werin thei that voidin ought,
She ſayid, that to ſlepin well her leſte;
Her women ſone unto her bedde her brought:
Whan al was huſh't than laie ſhe ſtil and thought
Of all this thing the manir and the wiſe;
Reherce it nedith not, for ye ben wiſe.
A nightingale upon a cedre grene
Undir the chambir wall there as ſhe laie
Full loude yſong ayen the monè ſhene,
Par'aventure in his bird'is wiſe a laie
Of love, that made her herte freſhe and gaie;
That herkenid ſhe ſo long in gode entent
Till at the laſt the deddè ſlepe her hent.
And as ſhe ſlept anon right tho her met
How that an egle, fethered white as bone,
Undir her breſt his longè clawis ſet,
And out her herte he rent, and that anon,
And did his herte into her breſt to gon,
Of which ſhe nought agroſe ne nothing ſmert,
And forthe he flyith with herte leſt for hert.

Digitized by Google

Now let her ſlepe, and we our talis holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleis ridden
Fro the ſçarmiſhe of the whiche I have tolde,
And in his chambir ſate and hath abidden
Til two or thre of his meſſangirs yeden
For Pandarus, and ſoughtin him full faſt
Til thei him found, and brought him at the laſt.
This Pandarus came leping in at ones,
And ſayid thus, Who hath ben well ibete
To daie with ſwerdis and with ſlongè ſtones
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?
And gan to jape, and ſaied, Lorde how ye ſwete!
But riſe and let us ſoupe and go to reſte:
And he anſwerde him, Doe we as the leſte.
With all the haſt godèly as thei might
Thei ſped 'hem fro the ſoupir and to bedde,
And every wight out at the dore him dight,
And wher' him liſt upon his wait he ſped,
But Troilus thought that his hertè bledde
For wo til that he herdè ſome tiding,
And ſayid, Frende, ſhall I now wepe or ſing?
(Quod Pandarus) Be ſtill and let me ſlepe,
And doe' on thy hode, thine nedis ſpedde ybe,
And cheſe if thou wolt ſing, or daunce, or lepe:
At ſhort wordis, thou ſhalt trowe all by me,
For, Sir, my nece woll doin well by the,
And love the beſt, by God and by my trothe,
But lacke of purſute marre it in thy ſlothe.

Digitized by Google

For thus ferforth I have thy werke begon
Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morowe
Her love of frendſhip have I to the won,
And therto hath ſhe laid her faith to borowe;
Algate o ſore is hameled of thy ſorowe:
What ſhould I lengir ſermon of it holde?
As ye have herd before all he him tolde.
But right as flouris through the cold of night
Icloſid ſtoupin in ther ſtalkis lowe,
Redreſſin 'hem ayen the ſunnè bright,
And ſpredin in ther kindè courſe by rowe,
Right ſo gan tho his eyin up to throwe
This Troilus, and ſaied, O Venus dere!
Thy might, thy grace, iheried be it here.
And to Pandare he held up both his hondes,
And ſayid, Lorde, all thine be that I have,
For I am whole, and broſtin ben my bondes:
A thouſande Troyis who ſo that me yave
Eche aftir othir, God ſo wis me ſave,
Ne might not me ſo gladin: lo! mine hert
It ſpredith ſo for joie it woll to ſterte.
But, Lorde, how ſhall I doen? how ſhall I liven?
Whan ſhall I next my own dere herte yſe?
How ſhall this longè time awaie be driven
Till that thou be ayen at her fro me?
Thou maieſt anſwere, Abide, abide; but *He*
That hangith by the necke, the ſothe to ſaine,
In grete diſeſe abidith for the paine.

Digitized by Google

All eſily now, for the love of Marte,
(Quod Pandarus) for every thing hath time,
So long abide till that the night departe,
For all ſo ſikir as thou lieſt here by me,
And God toforne, I woll be there at prime,
And for thy werke ſomwhat as I ſhall ſaie,
Or on ſome othir wight this charge laie.
For parde God wot I have evir yet
Ben redy the to ſerve, and to this night
Have I not faiped, but emforthe my wit,
Doen all thy luſt, and ſhal with al my might;
Doe now as I ſhall ſaine, and fare aright;
And if thou n'ilte, wite all thy ſelfe the care:
On me is nought along thine evill fare.
I wote well that thou wiſir art than I
A thouſande folde; but if I were as thou,
God helpe me ſo, as I would uttirly
Right of mine owne honde write to her now
A lettir, in whiche I would telle her how
I farde amiſſe, and her beſeche of routh:
Now helpe thy ſelf, and leve it for no ſlouth.
And I my ſelf ſhall therwith to her gon,
And whan thou woſt that I am with her there
Worthe thou up on a courſir right anon,
Ye hardily, and that in thy beſt gere,
And ride forth by the place as naught ne were,
And thou ſhalt finde us (if I maie) ſitting
At ſome windowe into the ſtrete loking.

Digitized by Google

And if the list than maiest thou us salue,
And upon me make thou thy countenaunce,
But by thy life beware, and fast eschue
To tarien ought; God shild us fro mischaunce!
Ride forth thy waie and hold thy govirnaunce;
And we shall speke of the somwhat I trow,
Whan thou art gon, to doe thine eris glow.
Touching thy bettir, thou are wise inough;
I wot thou n'ilte it doignèliche endite
As make it with these argumentis tough,
Ne scriven-like, or craftily it write;
Beblotte it with thy teris eke alite,
And if thou write a godely worde all soft,
Though it be gode reherce it not to oft:
For though that the best harpour upon live
Would on the beste sounid jolly harpe
That evir was with all his fingirs five
Touche aie o string; or aie o warble harpe,
Were his nailis poinctid nevir so sharpe,
It shuldè makin every wight to dull
To here his gle and of his strokis full.
Ne jombre no discordaunt thing ifere,
As thus, to usin termis of philike;
In lov'is termis holde of thy matere
The forme alwaie, and doe that it be like;
For if a paintir would ypainte a pike
With all'is fete, and huddid as an ape,
It cordith not, so were it but a jape.

Digitized by Google

This counſaile likid well to Troilus,
But as a dredfull lovir he ſaied this;
Alas! my derè brothir Pandarus!
I am aſhamid for to write iwis,
Leſt of mine ignorance I ſaied amis,
Or that ſhe n'olde it for diſpite receve;
Than wer I ded, there might it nothing weve.
To that Pandare anſwerid, If the leſt
Doe that I ſaie, and let me therewith gon,
For by that Lorde that formid eſt and weſt
I hope of it to bring anſwere anon
Right of her hond, and if that thou n'ilte non
Let be, and ſorie mote he ben his live
Ayenſt thy luſt that helpith the to thrive.
(Quod Troilus) Depardieux I aſſent;
Sithe that the liſte I woll ariſe and write,
And blisfull God praie I with gode entent
The viage and lettir I ſhall endite
So ſpede it, and thou Minerva the White
Yeve thou me witte my lettir to deviſe;
And ſet him doun, and wrote right in this wiſe.
Firſt he gan her his right ladie to call,
His hert'is life, his luſt, his ſorowe's leche,
His bliſſe, and eche theſe othir termis all
That in ſoche caſe ye lovirs allè ſeche,
And in full humble wiſe, as in his ſpeche,
He gan him recommaunde unto her grace;
To tell all how it aſkith mokill ſpace.

And aftir this full lowly he her praied
To be nought wrothe though he of his folie
So hardie was to her to write, and saied
That love it made, or ellis muſt he die,
And pitouſly gan mercie for to crie;
And aftir that he saied (and lied full loude)
Himſelf was little worthe, and laſſe he coud,
And that ſhe would have his conning excuſed,
That litil wae; and eke he dradde her ſo,
And his unworthineſſe aie he accuſed;
And aftir that than gan he tel his wo;
But that was endeleſſe withoutin ho;
And ſaid, he would in trouth alway him holde,
And redde it ovre', and gan the lettre folde:
And with his ſalte teris gan he bathe
The ruby in his ſignet, and it ſette
Upon the wexe delivirliche and rathe,
Therwith a thouſande timis er he lette
He kiſſe the lettre whan he had it ſhette,
And ſaide, Lettre, a bliſful deſtine
The ſhapin is; my lady ſhal the ſe!
This Pandare toke the lettre, and betime
A morowe to his nec'is paleis ſterte,
And faſt he ſwore that it was paſſid prime,
And gan to jape, and ſaide, Iwis mine herte
So freſhe it is (although it ſore ſmerte)
I maie nat ſlepe nevir a May'is morowe,
I have a joly wo, a luſty ſorowe.

Digitized by Google

Creſeidè, whan that ſhe her uncle herde,
With dredeful herte, and deſirous to here
The cauſe of his comming, right thus anſwerde;
Now by your ſaith, mine uncle (quod ſhe) dere!
What manir windis gidith you now here?
Tell us your joly wo and your penaunce;
How ferforth be ye put in lowlis daunce?
By God (quod he) I hop alwaie behinde,
And ſhe to laugh as though her herte to breſte.
(Quod Pandarus) Loke alwaie that ye finde
Game in mine hode, but herkeneth if you leſt;
Ther is right now come to the toune a geſt,
A Grekè eſpie, and tellith newè thinges,
For whiche I come to tell you newe tidinges.
Into the gardin go we', and ye ſhal here
Al privily of this a long ſermoun.
With that thei wentin arme in arme iſere
Into the gardin fro the chambre doun;
And what that he ſo ferre was that the ſoun
Of that which he ſpake no man herin might
He ſaid her thus, and out the lettir plight:
Lo! he that is al wholly your'is ſre
Him recommaundith lowly to your grace,
And ſent to you this letter here by me;
Aviſith you on it whan ye han ſpace,
And of ſome godely anſwere you purchace,
Or helpe me God ſo, plainely for to ſaine,
He maie not longè livin for his paine.

Digitized by Google

Ful dredefully tho gan ſhe ſtondin ſtil,
And toke it not, but all her humble chere
Gan for to chaungin, and ſaid, Scripe nor bil,
For love of God, that touchith ſuch matere,
Ne bring me none; and alſo, uncle dere!
To mine eſtate have more regarde I pray
Than to his luſt: what ſhouldin I more ſay?
And lokith now if this be reſo'nable,
And lettith not for favour ne for flouthe;
To ſaine a ſothe, now is it covenable
To mine eſtate, by God and by my trouthe,
To take it, or to havin of him routhe
In harming of my ſelfe or in repreve?
Beare it ayen for him that ye on leve.
This Pandarus gan on her for to ſtare,
And ſayid, Now is this the gretiſt wonder
That evir I ſawe; let be this nice fare:
To dethe mote I ſmittin be with thonder
Yf for the cite whiche that ſtondith yonder
Would I a lettir to you bring or take
To harme of you: what liſt you thus it make?
But thus ye farin well nigh all and ſome,
That he that moſt deſirith you to ſerve
Of him ye retchin leſt where he become,
And whethir that he live or ellis ſterve;
But for al that, that er I maie deſerve
Refuſe it not, (quod he) and hente her faſt,
And in her boſome doune the lettir thraſt,

Digitized by Google

And ſaid her, Now caſt it awaie anon
That folke maie ſene and gaurin on us twey.
(Quod ſhe) I can abide till thei be gon;
And gan to ſmile, and ſaid him, Eme, I pray
Suche anſwere as you liſt your ſelfe purvey,
For truily I wol no lettir write.
No, than wol I, (quod he) ſo ye endite.
Therwith ſhe lough, and ſayid, Go we dine;
And he gan at himſelfe to japin faſte,
And ſayid, Nece, I have ſo gret a pine
For love, that everiche othir daie I faſte;
And gan his beſtè japis forth to caſte,
And made her ſo to laugh at his folie
That ſhe for laughtir wenid for to die.
And whan that ſhe was comen' into the hall
Now eme, (quod ſhe) we wol go dine anon;
And gan ſome of her women to her call,
And ſtreight into her chambre gan ſhe gone;
But of her beſineſſis this was one
Amongis othir thingis, out of drede
Ful privily this lettir for to rede.
Aviſid word by word in every line,
And founde no lacke; ſhe thought he conde his gode,
And put it up, and went her in to dine;
And Pandarus, that in a ſtudie ſtode,
Er he was ware ſhe toke him by the hode,
And ſayid, Ye were caught er that ye wiſte.
I vouchſafe, (quod he) do whatere you liſte.

Tho wiſhin thei, and ſet 'hem doune and ete;
And aſtir none ful ſlighly Pandarus
Gan draw him to the windowe nie the ſtrete,
And ſayid, Nece, who hath arayid thus
The yondir houſe that ſtante aforyene us?
Which houſe? (quod ſhe) and gan for to beholde,
And knewe it wel, and whoſe it was him tolde:
And fellin forthe in ſpeche of thingis ſmale,
And ſatin in the windowe bothè twey.
Whan Pandarus ſawe time unto his tale,
And ſawe well that her folke wer al awey,
Now, necè mine, tel on (quod he) I prey;
How likith you the lettre that ye wot?
Can he theron? for by my trouth I n'ot.
Therwith al roſy hewid tho woxe ſhe,
And gan to hum, and ſayid, So I trowe.
Aquite him wel for Godd'is love (quod he)
My ſelfe tomedis woll the lettre ſowe,
And helde his hondis up, and fell on knowe.
Nowe godè nece, be it nevir ſo lite,
Yeve me the labour it to ſowe and plite.
Ye, for I can ſo writin (quod ſhe) tho,
And èke I n'ot what I ſhould to him ſay.
Naie, nece, quod Pandarus, ſaie you not ſo,
Yet at the leſt ythonkith him I pray
Of his gode will. O doth him not to dey!
Now for the love of me, my nece dere!
Refuſith not at this time my praiere.

Digitized by Google

Depardieux! (quod ſhe) God leve al be wele;
God helpe me ſo this is the firſt lettre
That er I wrote, ye al or any dele:
And into' a cloſet for to' aviſe her bettre
She went alone, and gan her herte unfettre
Out of Diſdain'is priſon but a lite,
And ſet her doun and gan a lettre write,
Of whiche to tel in ſhorte is mine entent
Th' effecte as ferre as I can undirſtonde:
She thonkid him of al that he wel ment
Towardis her, but holdin him in honde
She n'olde not, ne makin her ſelvin bonde
In love, but as his ſuſtir him to pleſe
She would aie faine to done his hert an eſe.
She ſhette it, and to Pandare in gan gon
There as he ſat and lokid into ſtrete,
And doun ſhe ſet her by him on a ſtone
Of jaſpre', upon a quisſhen of golde ibete,
And ſaid, As wiſely helpe me God the grete
I nevir did a thing with morè paine
Than write this, to the which ye me conſtraine.
And toke it him: he thonkid her, and ſeide,
God wot of thing ful oftin lothe-begonne
Comith ende gode: and, necè mine Creſeide,
That ye to him of harde now ben iwonne
Ought he be glad, by God and yondir ſonne;
For why? men ſaine *Impreſſionis light*
Full lightly ben aie redy to the flight.

Digitized by Google

But ye han plaied the tiraunt al to longe,
And harde was it your hertè for to grave;
Now ſtinte, that ye no lengir on it honge,
Al woldin ye the forme of daungir ſave,
But haſtith you to done him joye to have,
For truſtith wel, *To long idone hardneſſe*
Cauſith diſpite ful oftin for diſtreſſe.
And right as thei declarid this matere
Lo! Troilus right at the ſtret'is ende
Came riding with his tenthè ſomme ifere
Al ſoftily, and thidirwarde gan bende
There as they ſate, as was his waie to wende
To paleis warde, and Pandare him aſpide,
And ſaid, Nece, iſe who comith here ride!
O flie not in! he ſethe us I ſuppoſe,
Leſt he may thinkin that ye him eſchue.
Nay, nay, (quod ſhe) and woxe as redde as roſe:
With that he gan her humbly to ſalue
With dredful chere, and ofte his hewis mue,
And up his loke debonairly he caſt,
And beckid on Pandare and forth by paſt.
God wot if he ſat on his horſe aright,
Or godely was beſene that ilkè day;
God wot where he were like a manly knight;
What ſhould I dretche, or tel of his aray?
Creſeidè, which that al theſe thingis ſey,
To tell in ſhorte, her likid al ifere,
His perſon, his aray, his loke, his chere,

Digitized by Google

His godely manir and his gentilneſſe,
So well, that never ſithe that ſhe was borne
Ne haddin ſhe ſuche routhe of his diſtreſſe;
And howe ſo ſhe hath hard ben here beforne
To God hope I ſhe hath now caught a thorne,
She ſhal nat pul it out this nextè wike;
God ſende her mo ſuch thornis on to pike! 1274
Pandarus, whiche that ſtode her faſtè by,
Felte iron hotte, and he began to ſmite,
And ſeidè, Nece, I praye you hertilie
Tel me that I ſhal aſkin you alite;
A woman that were of his deth to wite,
Withouten' his gilt, but for her lacke of routh,
Were it wel done? (quod ſhe) Naie, by my trouth. 1281
God helpe me ſo, (quod he) ye ſay me ſothe,
Ye ſelin wel your ſelfe that I nought lie.
Lo! yonde he rideth, (quod ſhe) ye, ſo he dothe.
Wel, quod Pandare, as I have tolde you thrie,
Let be your nicete and your folie,
And ſpeke with him in eſing of his herte:
Let nicete nat do you bothè ſmerte. 1288
But theron was to hevin and to done,
Conſidiring al thing it maie nat be,
And why? for ſhame: and it were eke to ſone
To grauntin him ſo gret a liberte,
For plainly her entent (as ſayid ſhe)
Was for to love him unwiſt if ſhe might,
And guerdon him with nothing but with ſight. 1295

Digitized by Google

But Pandarus thought it shal nat be so;
If that I maie this nice opinion
Shal nat ben holdin fully yeris two;
What should I make of this a longe sermon?
He must assent on that conclusion
As for the time, and whan that it was eve,
And al was wel, he rose and toke his leve.
And on his way full fast homewarde he spedde,
And right for joy he felte his hert to daunce,
And Troilus he founde alone abedde,
That laie as done these lovirs, in a traunce,
Betwixin hope and derke disesperaunce;
But Pandarus right at his in comming
He song, as who saith, Lo! somwhat I bring;
And saide, Who is in his bedde so sone
Yburied thus? It am I, frende, (quod he.)
Who? Troilus! naie, helpe me so the mone,
(Quod Pandarus.) Thou shalt up rise and se
A charme that was ysent right now to the,
The whiche can helin the of thine axesse,
If thou do forthwith all thy besinesse.
Ye, through the might of God (quod Troilus.)
And Pandarus gan him the lettir take,
And saide, Parde God hath yholpin us:
Have here a light, and loke on all these blake.
But oftin gan the hert to glad and quake
Of Troilus while he it gan to rede
So as the wordis yave him hope or drede.

Digitized by Google

But, finally, he toke al for the beſte
That ſhe him wrote, for ſomwhat he beheldè
On which he thought he might his hertè reſt,
Al covired ſhe the wordis undir ſheldè;
Thus to the more worthy part he him heldè,
That what for hope and Pandarus behеſte
His gretè wo foryede he at the leſte.
But as we maie al daie our ſelvin ſe
Through more wode or cole kindlith the more fire,
Right ſo encreſe of hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful oft encreſith eke deſire,
Or as an oke cometh of a litil ſpire,
So through this lettir which that ſhe him ſent
Encreſin gan deſire, of whichе he brent.
Wherfore I ſay alway that day and night
This Troilus gan to deſirin more
Then he did erſt through hope, and did his might
To preſin on, as by Pandarus lore,
And writin to her of his ſorowes ſore
Fro day to day: he let it nought refreide
That by Pandare he ſomwhat wrot or ſeide;
And did alſo his othir obſervaunces
That till a lovir longith in this caas,
And aftir that his dice turnid on chaunces
So was he eithir glad, or ſaide Alas!
And held aſtir his geſtis aie his paas,
And aftir ſuche anſweris as he hadde
So werin his daies ſory othir glædde.

Digitized by Google

But to Pandare alway was his recours,
And pitouſly gan aie to him to plaine,
And him beſought of rede and ſome ſocours;
And Pandarus, that ſawe his wodè paine,
Wext wel nigh dod for routh, ſothe for to ſaine,
And beſely with al his hert gan caſte
Some of his wo to ſleen, and that as fáſte;
And ſaidè, Lorde, and frende, and brothir dere!
God wot that thy diſeſe ydothe me wo,
But wolt thou ſtintin al this woful chere,
And by my trouth er it be dayis two,
And God toforne, yet ſhal I ſhape it ſo
That thou ſhalt come into a certaine place
There as thou maiſt thy ſelfe praien her of grace.
And certainly I n'ot if thou it woſte,
But thei that ben experte in love it ſay,
It is one of theſe thingis fortherith moſt
A man to have a leiſir for to praie,
And ſikir place his wo for to bewraie,
For in gode hert it mote ſome routh impreſſe
To here and ſe the giltleſſe in diſtreſſe.
Par'aventure thinkiſt thou though it be ſo
That Kinde would her ydone for to beginne
To have a manir routh upon my wo,
Saith Daungir Nay, thou ſhalt me nevir win;
So rulith ſhe her hert'is goſte within
That though ſhe bendin yet ſhe ſtonte on rote;
What in effect is this unto my bote?

Digitized by Google

Thinke here ayen whan that the ſturdy oke,
On whiche men hackith oftin for the nones,
Recevid hath the happy falling ſtroke,
The grete ſweight makith it fall all at ones,
As done theſe grete rockis or theſe milneſtones,
For ſwiftir courſe cometh thing that is of wight,
Whan it diſcendith, than done thingis light.
But rede that bowith doune for every blaſt
Ful lightly ceſſith winde it wol ariſe,
But ſo n'il not an oke whan it is caſt,
It nedith me nought longe the for to' viſe;
Men ſhal rejoyſin of a grete empriſe
Atchevid wel, and ſtont withoutin dout,
Al have men ben the lengir there about.
But, Troilus, now tel me if the leſt
A thing whiche that I ſhal aſkin of the;
Whiche is thy brothir that thou loviſt beſt
As in thy very hert'is privite?
Iwis my brothir Deiphobus, (quod he.)
Now, (quod Pandare) er hour'is twiſè twelve
He ſhal the eſe unwiſt of it himſelve.
Now let me' alone, and workin as I may,
(Quod he) and to Deiphobus went he tho,
Which had his lord and gretè frend ben aie;
Save Troilus no man he lovid ſo:
To tel in ſhorte, withoutin wordis mo,
(Quod Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frende to a cauſe whiche that ytouchith me.

Digitized by Google

Yes, parde, (quod Deiphobus) wel thou woſt
Al that evir I may, and God tofore,
Al n'ere it but for the man I love moſt,
My brothir Troilus; but ſay wherfore
It is, for ſithe the day that I was bore
I n'as, ne nevir more to ben I thinke,
Ayenſt a thing that mightin the forthinke.
Pandarus gan him thanke, and to him ſeide,
Lo! Sir, I have a lady in this toune
That is my nece, and callid is Creſeide,
To whiche ſome men would done oppreſſioun,
And wrongfully have her poſſeſſioun,
Wherfore I of your lordſhip you beſeche
To ben our frende withoutin morè ſpeche.
Deiphobus him anſwerde, O! is nat this
That thou ſpekiſt of to me thus ſtraungely
Creſeide, my frende? Pandarus ſaid him Yes.
Than nedith (quod Deiphobus) hardily
No more of this, for truſtith wel that I
Wol be her champion with ſpere and yerde;
I ne rought nat though all her foes it herde.
But telle me, thou that woſt all this matere,
How might I beſt availin now? let ſe.
(Quod Pandarus) If ye, my lorde ſo dere,
Woldin as now do this honour to me
To prayin her to morowe, lo, that ſhe
Came unto you her plaintis to deviſe
Her adverſaries would of it agriſe.

Digitized by Google

And if I more durſt prayin you as now,
And chargin you to have ſo grete travaile,
To have ſome of your brethrin here with you,
That mightin to her cauſe bettir availe;
Than wotē I wel ſhe mightin nevir faile
For to ben holpin, what at your inſtaunce,
What with her othir frendis govirnaunce.
Deiphobus, whiche that comin was of kinde
To al honour and bounte to conſente,
Anſwerde, It ſhal he done; and I can finde
Yet greater helpe to this in mine entente:
What woldeſt thou ſaine if for Helen I ſent
To ſpeke of this? I trowe it be the beſt,
For ſhe may ledin Paris as her leſt.
Of Hector, which that is my lord my brother,
It nedith nat to praien him frende to be,
For I have herde him, o time and eke other,
Spekin of Creſeide ſuche honour that he
Maie ſaine no bet: ſuch hap to him hath ſhe
It nedith nat his helpis more to crave;
He ſhal be ſuche right as we wol him have.
Speke thou thy ſelfe alſo to Troilus
On my behalfe, and praie him with us dine.
Sir, al this ſhal be done, (quod Pandarus)
And toke his leve, and nevir gan to fine,
But to his nec'is houſe as ſtreight as line
He came, and found her fro the mete ariſe,
And ſet him doun, and ſpake right in this wiſe:

Digitized by Google

He ſaide, O very God ſo have I ronne,
Lo! necè mine, ſe ye nat how I ſwete?
I n'ot whethir ye the more thanke me conne:
Be ye not ware how that falſe Poliphete
Is now about eſtſonis for to plete,
And bringin on you advocacies newe?
I? no, (quod ſhe) and chaungid al her hewe.
What! is he more about me for to dretche,
And done? me wrong? what ſhal I don? alas!
Yet of him ſelfin nothing would I retche,
N'ere it for Antenor and Æneas,
That ben his frendis in ſuche manir caas;
But for the love of God, mine uncle dere!
No force of that, let him have al ifere,
Withoutin that I have inough for us.
Nay, (quod Pandare) it ſhal nothing be ſo,
For I have ben right now at Deiphobus,
At Hector, and mine othir lordis mo,
And ſhortly makid eche of 'hem his fo,
That by my thrifte he ſhal it nevir winne
For aught he can, whan ſo that he beginne.
And as thei caſtin what was beſt to done
Deiphobus, of his owne curtiſie,
Came her to praye in his propir perſone
To holde him on the morowe companie
At dinir, whiche ſhe ne wolde not denie,
But godely gan to his prayere obeye:
He thonkid her, and went upon his wey.

Digitized by Google

Whan this was don this Pandarus anone,
(To tellin in ſhorte) forth he gan to wende
To Troilus as ſtil as any ſtone,
And al this thing he tolde him orde and ende,
And how that he Deiphobus gan to blende,
And ſaide him, Now is time of that ye conne
To bere the belle to morow', and all is wonne.
Now ſpeke, now pray, now pitouſly complaine,
Let nat for nicè ſhame, for drede or ſlouth;
Somtime a man mote tel his ownè paine;
Beleve it, and ſhe wol have on the routh;
Thou ſhalt ben ſavid by thy faith and trouth:
But wel wot I thou now art in a drede,
And what it is I lay I can arede:
Thou thinkiſt now how ſhould I don al this,
For by my cheris moſtin folke eſpie
That for her love is that I fare amis,
Yet had I levre' unwiſt for ſorow die:
Nowe thinke nat ſo, for thou doſt gret folie,
For I right now have foundin a manere
Of ſleight for to coverin al thy chere.
Thou ſhalt gon ovirnight, and that as blive,
Unto Deiphobus houſe as the to plaie,
Thy malady awaie the bette to drive;
For why? thou ſemiſt ſike, the ſothe to ſaie;
Sone after that doune in thy bedde the laie,
And ſaie thou maiſt no lengir up endure,
And lie right there and bide thine avinture.

Say that the fevir is wont the to take
The famè time, and laſtin til a morowe;
And let ſe now how well thou canſt it make,
For parde ſike is he that is in ſorowe:
Go now, farwel, and Venus here to borowe
I hope and thou this purpoſe holdè ferme
Thy grace ſhe ſhal the fully thereconferme.
(Quod Troilus) Iwis thou alle nedeleſſe
Counſailiſt me that ſikeliche I me faine,
For I am ſike in erneſt dountèleſſe,
So that wel nigh I ſtervin for the paine.
(Quod Pandarus) Thou ſhalt the bettir plaine,
And haſt the leſſe nede for to counterfete,
For *Him men demin bote that men ſe ſwete.*
Lo! holde the at thy triſtè cloſe, and I
Shal wel the deere unto thy bowe ydrive:
Therwith he toke his leve all ſoftily,
And Troilus to his paleis went blive,
So glad ne was he ner in al his live,
And to Pandarus rede gan al aſſent,
And to Deiphobus houſe at night he went.
What nedith it to tellin al the chere
That Deiphobus unto his brothir made,
Or his axis, or his ſikeliche manere
How men gon him with clothis for to lade
When he was laid, and how men would him glade?
But all for nought; he helde forth aie the wiſe
That ye han herde Pandare er this deviſe.

Digitized by Google

But certaine is er Troilus him leide
Deiphobus had praied him ovirnight
To ben a frende and helping to Crefeide;
God wot that he that grauntid anon right
To ben her fullè frend with al his might:
But ſuch a nede was it to praien him thenne
As for to biddin a wode man to renne.
The morow came, and nighin gan the time
Of mealtide, whan that the faire Quene Helen
Shope her to ben an hour aftir the prime
With Deiphobus, to whom ſhe n'olde faine,
But as his ſuſtir homely, ſothe to ſaine,
She came to dinir in her plaine entent,
But God and Pandare wiſt al what this ment.
Came eke Creſeide all innocent of this,
Antigone her nece and Tarbe' alſo:
But flie we now prolixite beſt is,
For love of God, and let us faſt ygo
Right to the effecte withoutin talis mo,
Why al this folke aſſemblid in this place,
And let us of ther ſaluingis pace.
Gret honour did 'hem Deiphobus certaine,
And fedde 'hem wel with al that might 'hem like,
But evirmo, alas! was his refraine,
My godè brothir, Troilus the ſike,
Lithe yet; and therwithal he gan to ſike,
And aftir that he painid him to glade
'Hem as he might, and cherè gode he made.

Digitized by Google

Complainid eke Helen of his ſikeneſſe
So faithfully, that pity was to here,
And every wight gan wexin for axes
A leche anon, and ſaide, In this manere
Men curin ſolke, this charme I wol the lere:
But there ſate one, al liſt her nat to teche,
That thought, yet beſt couldin I ben his leche.
Aftir complaint him gonnin thei to preiſe,
As ſolke don yet whan ſome wight hath begon
To preiſe a man, and up with preiſe him reiſe
A thouſande folde yet higher than the ſon;
He is, he can, that fewe othir lordes kon;
And Pandarus of that thei would afferme
He nought forgate ther praiſing to conferme.
Herde al this thing feire Creſeide wel inough,
And every worde gan for to notifie,
For whiche with ſobre chere her hertè lough,
For who is that ne would her glorifie
To mowin ſuche a knight done live or die?
But al paſſe I, leſt ye to longe ydwell;
But for o fine is al that er I tell.
The timè came fro dinir for to riſe,
And as'hem ought ariſin everichone,
And gone a while of this and that deviſe;
But Pandárus brake al this ſpeche anon,
And ſaid to Deiphobus, Wol ye gon,
If it your will be, as I erſt you prayde,
To ſpekin of the nedis of Creſeide?

Digitized by Google

Helen, which that by the hondè her helde,
Toke firſt the tale, and ſaidè, Go we blive;
And godely on Creſeidè ſhe behelde,
And ſayid, Jovis, let him nevir thrive
That doth you harm, and reve him ſone of live,
And yeve me ſorowe but he ſhal it rue
If that I may, and allè folke be true.
Tel thou thy nec'is caſe, (quod Deiphobus
To Pandarus) for thou canſt beſt it tell.
My Lordis and my, Ladies, it ſtant thus;
What ſhould I lengir (quod he) do you dwell?
He ronge 'hem out a proces like a bell
Upon her foe, that hight was Polyphete,
So heinous that men mightin on it ſpete.
Anſwerde of this eche worſe of 'hem than other,
And Poliphete thei gonnin thus to warien,
An hongid be ſuche one were he my brother,
And ſo he ſhal, for it ne maie nought varien:
What ſhould I lengir in this talè tarien?
Plainiliche al at onis thei her highten
To ben her frende in all that er thei mighten.
Spake than Helen, and ſaid to Pandarus,
Wot aught my lord my brothir of this matere,
I mene Hector, or wote it Troilus?
He ſaid her Ye; but wol ye me now here?
Me thinketh thus, ſith that Troilus is here
It were gode if that ye wouldin aſſent
She tolde him her ſelfe al this er ſhe went;

Digitized by Google

For he wol have the more her grefe at herte,
Bicauſe lo, ſhe a worthie lady is,
And by your wil I wol but in right ſterte,
And do you wete, and that anon iwis,
If that he ſlepe or wol aught here of this:
And in he lept, and ſaid him in his ere,
God have thy ſoule! for brought have I thy bere.
To ſmilin of this gan tho Troilus;
And Pandarus withoutin rekining
Out went to Helen and Deiphobus,
And ſaid 'hem, So there be no tarying,
Ne morè preſe, he wol well that ye bring
Creſeide my lady that is now here,
And as he maie enduren he wol her here.
But wel ye wote the chambre is but lite,
And fewè folke may lightly make it warme;
Now lokith ye, for I wol have no wite.
To bring in preſe that might I ydon him harme,
Or him diſeſin for my bettir arme;
Wher' it be bet ſhe abide till eftſonis
Now lokith ye, that knowin what to don is.
I ſay for me beſt is, as I can knowe,
That no wight in ne wendè but ye twey,
But it were I, for I can in a throwe
Reherſe her caſe unlike that ſhe can ſey,
And aftir this ſhe may onis him prey
To ben godelorde in ſhort, and take her leve;
This may not mokill of his eſe him reve.

And eke for she is straunge he woll forbere
His ese, whiche that him darin nat for you;
Eke othir thing that touchith nat to her
He wol it tel, I wote it wel right now,
That secrete is, and for the town'is prow:
And thei, that knew nothing of his entente,
Without more to Troilus in thei wente.
Heleine in all her godely softly wise
Gan him salue and womanly to plaie,
And saied, Iwis ye mote algate arise;
Now, fairè brothir, be all whole I praie;
And her arme right ovre' his shuldir laie,
And him with all her wit to recomfort;
As she best could she gan him to disport.
So after this (quod she) We you beseke,
My dere brothir! Deiphobus and I,
For love of God, and so doeth Pandare eke,
To ben gode lorde and frende right hertily
Unto Cresеide, whiche that certainly
Recevid wrong, as wot well here Pandare,
That can her case well bet than I declare.
This Pandarus gan newe his tong affile,
And all her case reherce, and that anone:
Whan it was saied, sone aftir in a while
(Quod Troilus) As sone as I maie gone
I woll right fain with all my might ben one,
Have God my trouth, her cause for to susteine:
Nowgood thrift have ye (quod Helen the Quene.)

Digitized by Google

(Quod Pandarus) And it your will ybe
That ſhe maie take her leve er that ſhe go.
O, ellis God forbid it! (tho quod he)
If that ſhe vouchſafin for to doe ſo.
And with that worde (quod Troilus) Ye two,
Deiphobus and my ſuſtir lefe and dere,
To you have I to ſpeke of a matere,
To ben aviſid by your rede the better;
And found (as hap was) at his bedd'is hedde
The copie of a tretiſe and a letter
That Hector had him ſent to aſkin redde
If ſoche a man was worthy to ben dedde?
Wote I naught who, but in a griſly wiſe
He prayid 'hem anone on it aviſe.
Deiphobus gan this letter for to' unfolde
In erneſt grete, ſo did Helen the Quene,
And roming outwarde faſt it gonne beholde,
Dounward a ſteire, into an herber grene;
This ilkè thing thei reddin 'hem betwene,
And largily the mountenaunce of an houre
Thei gonne on it to redin and to poure.
Now let 'hem rede, and tournè we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full faſtè prie
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the grete chambir, and that in hie,
And ſayid, God ſave all this companie!
Come, necè mine, my ladie Quene Helen,
Abidith you, and eke my lordis twene.

Digitized by Google

Rise, take with you your nece Antigone,
Or whom you list, or no force hardily;
The lasse presse the bettir: come forth with me,
And lokith that ye thonkin humbily
Them all thre, and whan ye maie godily
Your time isee takith of 'hem your leve,
Let we to long his restis him bireve.
All innocent of Pandarus entent
Quod tho Creseide, Go we, uncle dere!
And arme in arme inward with him she went,
Avising well her wordis and her chere;
And Pandarus in ernestfull mantre
Sayid, All folke, for Godd'is love I praie,
Stintith right here, and softily you plaie.
Avisith you what folke ben here within,
And in what plite one is, God him amende!
And inward thus full softily begin;
Nece, I conjure and highly you defende,
On his behalfe whiche that soule us all sende,
And in the vertue of corounis twaine,
Slea nat this man that hath for you this paine.
Fie on the devill! thinke whiche one he is,
And in what plite he lieth; come of anone;
Thinke all soche taried tide but lost it n'is,
That woll ye bothe faine whan ye ben one;
And secondly, there yet devinith none
Upon you two; come of now if ye conne
While folke is blent, lo! all the time is wonne.

Digitized by Google

In titiring, and purſute, and delaies,
The folke devine at wegging of a ſtre,
And though ye would han aftir merie daies
Than dare ye nat; and why? for ſhe and ſhe
Spake ſoche a worde; thus lokid he and he:
Leſt time be loſte I dare nat with you dele,
Come of therfore, and bringith him to hele.

But now to you, ye lovirs that ben here,
Was Troilus nat in a cankedort,
That laie and might the whiſpring of hem here,
And thought, o Lorde! right now rennith my ſort
Fully to die or have anone comfort,
And was the firſt time that he ſhould her praie
Of love; o mightie God! what ſhall he ſaie?

Explicit liber ſecundus.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
Remainder of The Romaunt of the Roſe,	5
Troilus and Creſeide. In five bokes.	
——————— Boke I.	93
——————— Boke II.	132

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
Jan. 4. 1783.

END OF VOLUME EIGHTH.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

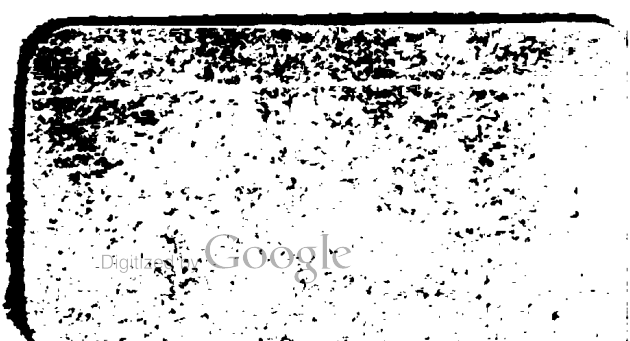
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

APR 1 8 1932



Digitized by Google